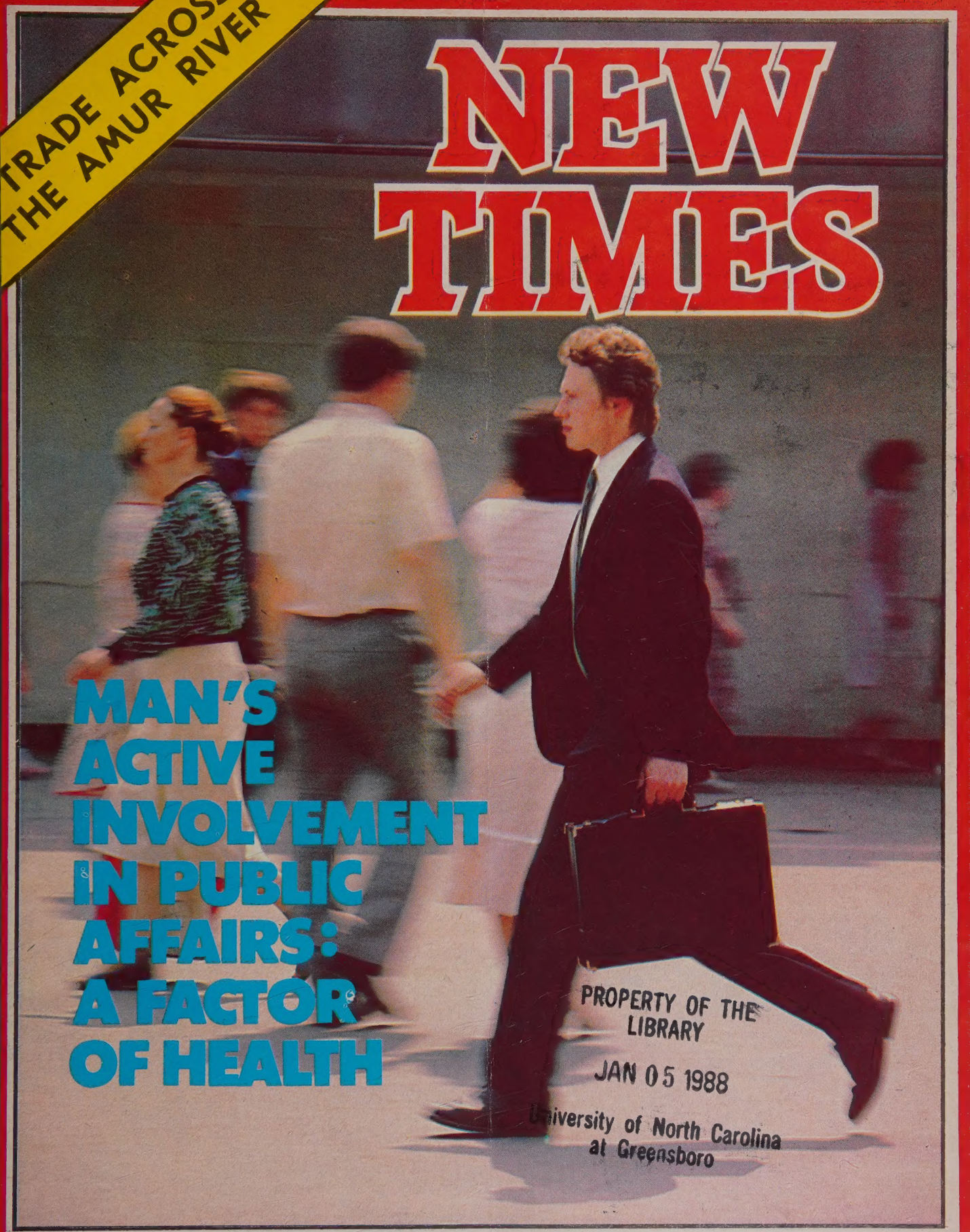
A SOVIET WEEKLY OF WORLD AFFAIRS

TRADE ACROSS THE AMUR RIVER

NEW TIMES



MAN'S ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS: A FACTOR OF HEALTH

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SUPERCONDUCTIVITY: BREAKTHROUGH INTO THE 21st CENTURY

1917–1987

TIME AND PEOPLE

Almost a year has passed since the national contest for the post of manager of the Riga automobile plant was held. Today the news of the election of managers surprises no one. But does that mean that business executives have unanimously backed the new idea?

Sociologists have polled sixty factory managers in Sverdlovsk, and only seven of them favour the principle of election. Perhaps this merely shows that the idea is new, revolutionary and difficult, and that therefore both advocates and opponents are inevitable.

Today we are all learning to live in an increasingly democratic society. The process of democratization has come to involve theatre companies and party bodies, schools and government institutions. Such words as independence, self-sufficiency and self-financing are becoming increasingly familiar to us.

However, to fill these words with content, competence is required. While taking decisions, everyone should be familiar with the substance of the matter. That is why perestroika and democratization, perestroika and glasnost are so closely interconnected. That is why we say: more socialism means more democracy, more freedom.

We are turning to the little-known pages of our history, because without this we shall be unable to understand the present and look into the future.

Another experiment was held last June. In a number of constituences several candidates were nominated for one seat in the election to local Soviets.

We are openly discussing ways of reforming the vital institutions of our democracy, the work of Soviets at all levels, and updating obsolete laws and decrees.

The promotion of democracy is helping solve long overdue problems, but simultaneously it raises new problems. We have a great deal to learn. We are only taking the initial steps on a long road. But we are on the right path.

The family cooperative "Starkis." ● The programme "Public Opinion" on the air (Leningrad). ● Vilor Ordin has been elected new manager of the amalgamation.

A SOVIET WEEKLY
OF WORLD AFFAIRS

NEW TIMES

51 December 1987
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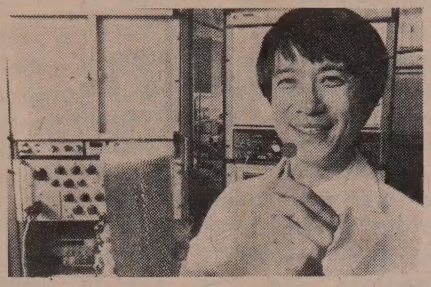

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NEW TIMES

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FROM OUR MAILBAG

The world has heaved a sigh of relief: the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. have signed a treaty eliminating medium- and shorter-range missiles. That is a victory for common sense.

The first practical step towards a nuclear-free world has been made. The two great powers will soon begin destroying their nuclear weapons. We say Yes to the treaty, but we have to move further. We are looking forward to the day when the U.S. Congress ratifies the agreement.

SEIDAHMED AHMEDOV

Azerbaijan, U.S.S.R.

Under the Soviet-American treaty, the missiles on the territory of Czechoslovakia are to be destroyed. The same fate awaits the missiles deployed in certain other socialist and capitalist countries. I think there are few people who will not welcome this historic decision. Were these nuclear weapons which are many times more powerful than the bomb dropped on Hiroshima, to be used millions of people would have been killed. Now such a danger no longer threatens them.

JIRI MORAVEC

Bratislava, Czechoslovakia

It seems to me that the document signed in Washington by Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev lays an excellent foundation for talks on a 50 per cent cut in strategic weapons, for improving relations between the two powers in practically all fields. I hail the two leaders who shouldered the responsibility for the fate of peace.

ARVE HILTUNEN

Helsinki, Finland

EDITORIAL

THE ART OF CHANGING THE WORLD

Historic events are those that stand out amongst other less significant ones and become landmarks, turning points, imparting a new dimension and direction to the times. Did the world change in the three days of the Soviet-American summit? Or has it done so in the week since the talks ended?

Apparently not yet. The only change is in the tone of the response and commentaries that continue to come from all corners of the earth. They have become less emotional, more businesslike, reflecting the wish to determine the nature of future changes and their possible consequences. The wish to understand the new realities, which have not yet taken root, to be sure that the world really is entering a nuclear-free era, the era of disarmament.

The way to it has been opened. But whether it will be attained depends on the participants in the agreements reached, on their will and actions, on the will and actions of their allies and, in fact, on all members of the world community. Will everything mapped out during the Washington summit be implemented or will it be put off indefinitely?

There are quite a number of sceptics. And no fewer opponents. There are doubts about the efficacy of the Euromissile agreement. Some people even regard it as detrimental to European security, as if Europe's destiny had been even more precarious when no such missiles existed.

It is indeed true that the treaty changes the situation, but it enhances security, not lessens it, as some people think, because it reduces the level of the overall approximate parity. Problems? Yes, they exist. And for them to be resolved the disarmament process has to be continued in all spheres, widening the circle of those involved in it. No ready recipes exist, new trails have to be blazed, and anyone can join in.

All that is needed, as Mikhail Gorbachev said at his Washington news conference, "is to get down to the negotiating table, put all your cards on the table, and stop accusing one another." The Soviet Union is prepared to start such work right away; it is ready for the most radical decisions and cuts in armaments.

The problem of trust? But doesn't the INF treaty set an example of the broadest openness? International relations have never before known mutual control on such a scale and in such depth.

There is another aspect to control - the wider contacts between those who until now have been excluded (or almost excluded) from international East-West contacts: between the military, between experts on defence and military hardware. May be the contact between them, among others, will make it easier to understand each other's intentions? And perhaps there will at last be fewer anxieties?

Because one thing is clear: peace can no longer be built on the basis of a "balance of fear." "A war of nerves, a psychological war can affect a person more severely than a physical war." Those words belong to the great Russian painter and philosopher Nikolai Roerich. There is no choice: neither is the lesser evil. Both common sense and morality compel us to reject both.... "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good," says an old and respected book.

We are only just beginning to accept the far from new truism that people, not arms, make history. And the time has come to learn to make history in a new way. Without lethal iron, lead and plutonium. Then the world can be changed and preserved. That is the finest of fine arts.

AMERICA LIKES GLASNOST

WASHINGTON

Thousands of words were uttered, and commented upon in millions more on those historic days in Washington. Of this number I'd like to single out just twelve, which comprise a single simple sentence and can serve as an epigraph to and a conclusion to be drawn from the summit:

"Mankind is beginning to realize that it has had enough of wars." (From Mikhail Gorbachev' speech at the U.S. Department of State).

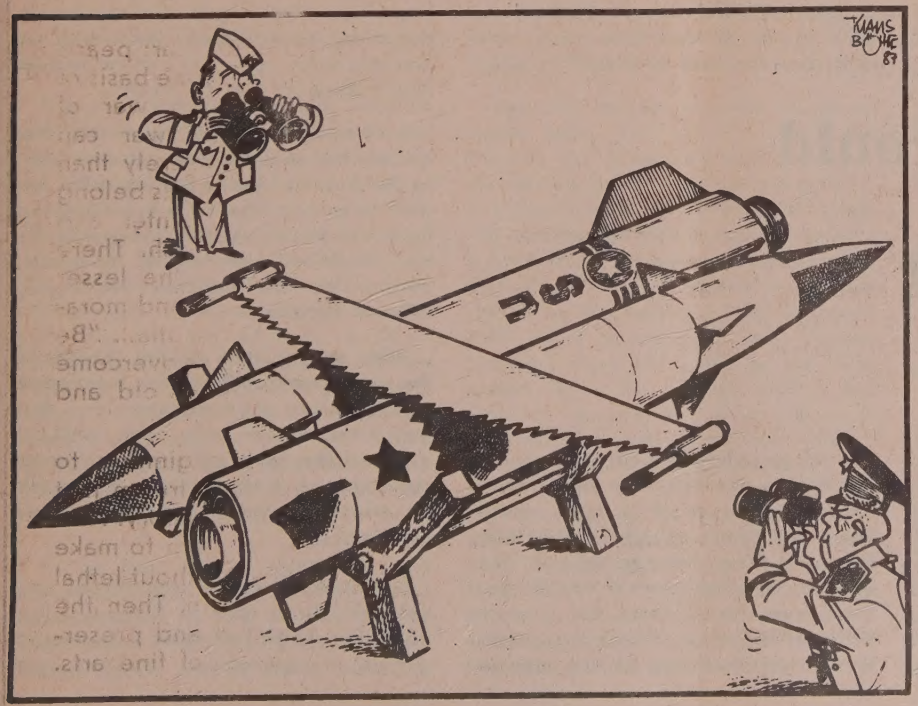
The summit which gave rise to a wealth of speculation, doubts and disputes and on which many hopes and expectations were pinned, is over. Politicians and journalists (ourselves included) are bound to look back now and again on its landmarks as they assess current political realities, ascertaining the progress made so far and the route of further advance. The witnesses of that event are still full of first--hand impressions. Details of what they have seen and heard clash, pile up, and combine into arbitrary patterns pop-art style in which things important and not-so--important, high politics and commonplaces get along on an equal footing.

From our special correspondent
ALEXANDER PUMPYANSKY

Washington patchwork

A Marine orchestra attached to the White House rehearsed the Soviet National Anthem.... GIs waved red pennants.... A newspaper commentator quipped: "Few in the country were immune to the drama of TV pictures of the two leaders in profile with the real Soviet flag whipping in the wind behind them."

During divine service in Washington Cathedral the continuous public prayer for the success of the summit was offered up by American preachers of various Christian denominations and by Russian orthodox priests....



At the entrance to the National Press Club, mummers masked as the two leaders shoved tabloids headlined "LaRouche for President!" at passersby. "I shall tear the INF off!" the new-fangled "presidential candidate" threatened. I was LaRouche and his cronies from the extremist party who had sued New Times in Paris.

Tight security measures were taken. Concrete barriers were put up in front of the Soviet embassy, and street traffic was restricted. Before every trip the minibus that plied between the Hotel Vista (where Soviet newsmen were billeted) and the press centre was inspected by police using dogs trained to sniff out dynamite.

In the plush Hotel Mariotte, a press centre and a café called Glasnost were set up overnight. A newspaper headline screamed: "Glasnost is Danger!" A sportswear store offered T-shirts inscribed "Glasnost" in Russian or English characters for the customers to choose from. Such T-shirts cost 50 per cent more than those bearing other inscriptions: glasnost is at a premium.

A black plywood horse about four metres tall, rigged up in a hurry, had a warning splashed on its flank: "The INF is a Trojan Horse!"

All the media reported an unfortunate incident involving the children's organization Peace Bird which had sent roses to the two leaders. In the Soviet embassy the kids met with a warm reception, but the White House slammed its door in their faces, and relegated their floral tribute to the garbage can. What the incident went to show was not so much that the White House men are wicked, as that policy--making should not be left to janitors. Moreover, it furnished fresh evidence of how harmful bureaucracy can be at any, even the highest, level.

Margarita Papandreou, the first lady of Greece, made an animated speech on behalf of the international organization Women for a Meaningful Summit.... The organization Women for SDI staged a mini-demonstration in Lafayette Park.... On the days of the summit, the park, a traditional meeting place of all those wishing to speak up and draw attention to

themselves, was babel of voices either denouncing the summit with Afghan, Jewish and Ukrainian nationalist accents, or welcoming it - the "peaceniks" of the Freeze, SANE and other anti-war organizations, Elbe linkup veterans and Vietnam war veterans were all for the summit.

I shall take the liberty of digressing a little from my subject at this point. Stretching my legs one day, I chanced upon the monument to the Americans who had lost their lives in the Vietnam war. It was an utterly realistic sculpture of three privates frozen in crouched anticipation of the dangers threatening them from all sides. The names of all those who had perished in Vietnam - almost 50,000 of them - were cut on a black marble stele alongside a ditch.

I saw a young woman pressing a sheet of paper against the marble and vigorously rubbing her hand against it. When she finally stopped and held the sheet up for inspection, it bore the imprint of a name, probably dear to her - the last trace of a vanished life....

In Lafayette Park I had a talk with a tall leisurely man of about 40, wearing khakis and a helmet - and suddenly realized that this scene was not entirely irrelevant to the subject of my story. Asked why he was there, he replied: "I had friends who died in Vietnam. I don't want anyone to die the way they did...."

Someone calling himself "Wake Up, Mr America" had hired a plane in order to take his message as high as the skies.

Another sensational report: an American plane loaded with supplies for the contras was shot down over Nicaragua. Even the Summit did not go without an American plane violating someone's airspace!

The sight of Marshal Sergei Akhromeyev, Chief of the General Staff of the Soviet Armed Forces, entering the Pentagon for talks with U.S. Defence Secretary Frank Carlucci and Admiral William Crow, chairman of U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, takes some getting used to, I must say.

In the press centre, briefings for 7,000 newsmen were held jointly by Martin Fitzwater, a White House spokesman, and Gennady Gerasimov of the U.S.S.R. Foreign Ministry - an unforgettable pair who made up in humour for what we lacked in information; and humour is a commodity you can't ever have enough of....

Van Cliburn staged a comeback and played "Evenings in the Moscow Countryside" in the White House. Television builds bridges between continents, so dragging someone back from oblivion is no problem to it. A TV network interviewed the hero of the White House concert, whom the narrator showered with questions like what he felt at the moment when it occurred to him to break into song and to invite the audience to sing along; why he hadn't been heard of over the past few years; and what his plans were. The moved pianist answered all questions at length. His face - the face of a man who had been through a lot - spoke louder than words. Now fifty, he has experienced triumph and despair, but it so happened that all the "ups" in the roller coaster of his life were connected with Moscow, Tchaikovsky, Russia. And now that he seemed to have resigned himself to being past his prime, he was suddenly in the limelight again - and on the crest of a tidal wave of popularity stirred up by a Russian melody. Yes, he would give public recitals again, he said happily, he had just been offered two flattering engagements, one of them by the National Symphony Orchestra from Washington.

Van Cliburn's is a unique case. But **why** is it unique, I wondered later. Why are the links between our two countries so undeservingly weak? Why does military and ideological confrontation suppress business, cultural and human relationships? Who has gained from this? Neither of the two nations has - rather the contrary.

We're different. So what?

In his speech at the INF treaty signing ceremony, Mikhail Gorbachev quoted Emerson as saying: "The best reward for a job well done is having it done." Ronald Reagan cited a quotation from Tolstoi. A magnificent exchange. In the lobbies, journalists betted on how many Russian sayings and catch phrases the President would use. With his penchant for proverbial wisdom, Ronald Reagan surpassed all expectations. But we didn't mind at all, for that was the kind of "information leak" that benefits all.

Constance A. Morella:

"Next year could be something special"

My meeting with this small energetic woman took place in her office on Capitol Hill. A Republican member of the House of Representatives of the U.S. Congress, Constance A. Morella, known to her colleagues and the electorate as Connie, is full of unshakeable optimism. I noticed a big photograph on the wall showing her with her husband and their six children.

I take an optimistic view of the summit, she told me. We have been awaiting for it for a long time. A month ago I met Mr Shultz and other participants in the talks. They said things were going well. Then after the State Secretary's visit to Moscow, there were certain fears. But soon the situation cleared up. I think my optimism and anxiety are shared by most members of Congress. It's true that some are suspicious. They argue that since we doubt the Soviet Union's adherence to previous agreements, how can we be sure they'll abide by the INF treaty?

But these fears are hardly justifiable. We all know that no one can win a nuclear war, so the arsenals have to be reduced if we want to survive. That's the first thing we have in common. Secondly, the peoples of our countries want to live in peace, despite the fact that we live under different systems.

What do you think are the chances of the treaty being ratified? You mentioned a certain group of Congressmen. I've also met Conservatives who have publicly declared that they will seek to prevent ratification or, at least, change it so much by various amendments that it will become meaningless.

I've attended several conferences, and not just official ones in Congress. For instance, recently I attended a meeting of women Representatives. We discussed

What mattered to us most of all were the subjects of discussions, the negotiators' tones of voice, the points on which they agreed - or disagreed. In spite of all, we wanted a duet, not a duel. Life experience warns us to be conservative in our estimates, but we still have a strong impression that what we heard in Washington carried a world of meaning.

The outcome of the meeting depended on what would be brought to the fore - our differences, or what we have in common.

Far from being passed over in silence, the differences were discussed at considerable length, sometimes sharply. What political conclusions did the two leaders draw?

Ronald Reagan: This unpleasant reality is no cause for pessimism, we must regard it as a challenge to change over from confrontation to cooperation.

Mikhail Gorbachev: In modern politics, wisdom consists in not using these differences as a pretext for confrontation, enmity and the arms race.

Ronald Reagan was of the opinion that man's fundamental convictions as regards the relationships between citizens and the state, between man and god, constitute the essence of rivalry between our two countries. He said he was speaking about responsibility which required that our differences be settled peacefully.

Mikhail Gorbachev: Without belittling the great political and ideological distances which separate us, we intend to seek and find pathways for rapprochement in the areas of vital importance for both of us and for the whole of mankind.

Note the similarity of these statements in tone and content. What's behind it? Certainly not the desire to impress one another. There were objective reasons, to be sure. A reflection of common reality - this is what we saw this time in the speeches by the two statesmen different to the point of being poles apart. After all, we are all in the same boat. Modern politics is, to a greater extent than ever, the art of discerning the dangers, problems and needs of real life and the needs of the people of all nations, that is, not only of any particular one, and of all mankind.

There is no denying the fact that deep-going differences can furnish a "justification" for hostility and a pretext for perpetuating confrontation. The beaten track leads to hopeless conclusions. The realities of the nuclear age demand something entirely different: that we should not entrench ourselves in our differences, prevent them from developing into armed conflicts, from causing us to lose our head. These differences should be regarded as a constructive challenge, as an invitation to cooperation; new and unexpected prerequisites for cooperation should be sought in them.

Frankly, I did not expect President Reagan to prove capable of drawing such conclusions. His entire record offered no hope of that. I proved mistaken, and that was good. It is precisely for his new realism that the President is coming under fire from his own "comrades-in-arms."

President accused of treason

Senator Jesse Helms described the INF treaty as a bag of worms. Howie Phillips, another Conservative militant, went even further than that: he called the President "a useful idiot from the Kremlin's standpoint."

This kind of language alone gives away the fanatics, whose tiny one-track minds can be likened to a nuclear-pumped laser which generates a tremendous amount of energy confined to a pencil beam. Why are they so resentful? The way they see it, Ronald Reagan has betrayed the very idea! Christian fundamentalists turned their backs on Reagan because he had "joined hands with an anti-God regime."

Now Ronald Reagan is being vindictively reminded of the following statement he once made: "Most people agree that the ideological struggle with Russia is the No. 1 problem in the world... and yet many men in high places in government and many who mould public opinion in the press and on the airwaves subscribe to the theory that we are at peace... The inescapable truth is that we are at war, and we are losing that war simply because we don't or won't realize we are in it!"

True, these words were uttered way back in 1961. But, first of all, Reagan has repeatedly spoken in the same vein since then. And second, "true conservatives" plume themselves on their unadulterated ideological purity: although the world has changed over the past twenty-five years, their views haven't. They proceed from dogma, not from reality. Any attempt to adjust the dogma to reality is regarded by them as treason.

Their sermons boil down to the following: communism is a system of total repression, of subordinating the individual to the state. The U.S.S.R. is a totalitarian state which has set itself the objective of conquering the world. There can be no peaceful coexistence between it and the

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the problems of nuclear armament systems. Women in our times are coming to understand these problems better and better.

Experts explained to us how effective verification of the destruction of the various types of armaments could be set up. One couldn't describe the means of verification of the treaty as unrealistic. Abidance by the treaty can be controlled effectively. What's more, the Soviet Union has shown real interest and readiness for control, which I believe it did not do in the past. We, too, are ready. A couple of months ago Max Kampelman informed members of Congress of the efficacity of the control methods provided for by the treaty. So I believe that the control envisaged is sufficiently good for us to be able to believe each other and know that the treaty will not be violated.

To go back to the question of the amendments with which some right-wing members want to lard the treaty. They want to link it to regional conflicts and human rights. Among other issues, in Congress you deal with human rights. Do you think the treaty should be linked to other major problems! Or would it be better for them to be resolved separately!

Yes, I'm actively involved in human rights issues. Our country signed the Helsinki Act. These problems should, in my opinion, be resolved in every country. But specifically about the Treaty. Although I'm sure the question of amendments will crop up in the debate, nevertheless in the final count it will be ratified in the form signed by the leaders of our countries. Both our President and your General Secretary need the treaty to the same extent. Both for foreign policy and domestic reasons. We have masses of problems in the country that need solving, as for instance the budget deficit.

That is one of the main reasons why opponents of the ratification of the treaty could be defeated. I know that Senator Dole, leader of the Republicans in the Senate, is moving increasingly towards ratification. So far he has made no public statement, as Vice-President Bush did. But his attitude is becoming more and more constructive.

At first I was distressed that George Bush was the only one of the Republic contenders for the presidency to declare his support for the treaty.

And what course do you think events will take next year!

Our President intends to make a substantial contribution to peace. This is all the more important as 1988 is election year. And success on the international scene will strengthen the position of the Republican party. I believe we shall reach agreement on a 50 per cent cut in offensive weapons. A settlement on chemical weapons also seems extremely likely. So, in my opinion, 1988 could be something special in the history of Soviet-American relations from the point of view of agreements on reducing and abolishing all kinds of armaments.

EVGENY ANDRIANOV
New Times special correspondent

Washington - Moscow

liberal West. This being so, why all the handshakes and treaties? The East responds only to force. Any form of arms control is a hoax. Such is the catechism of the eternally Right.

Flora Lewis, the keenly observant New York Times analyst, aptly described this crowd as "knee-jerk" conservatives (implying the reflex contraction of the knee muscles induced by a tap of a neurologist's mallet.)

To quote Pete du Pont, a Republican presidential nominee: "We defend freedom in this country, we don't just strive for peace." Opposing peace to freedom is typical. (Remember Haig's famous phrase "There are things more important than peace"?) By this logic, any move towards peace amounts to the betrayal of freedom, to criminal softness vis-a-vis communism, to "selling out to communism."

It would be dangerous to underestimate the influence of the political fundamentalists. Reagan, I fear, will have to try and build bridges between himself and his furious colleagues and old confidants. In an election year any contender for the presidency will have to take their sentiments into account, but it will be at the expense of realism. That, however, is not all. American society in its entirety is infected to one degree or other with the virus of anti-communist prejudice.

Material for the enemy image

How is it done? Very simply. The enemy image is created to order, simply by playing on the public's lack of knowledge.

Revolutionaries, it is alleged, have no conscience or moral sense. They are prepared to do anything to destroy social institutions. To back this allegation up, there are quotes from Nechayev - conservative journalists take pleasure in referring to him by his Christian name and patronymic. The quotations are indeed shocking. But it is never mentioned that the Social Democrats rejected Nechayev back in the 19th century. Right-wingers, who don't think much of Nechayev, turn to the words and deeds of Trotsky, Stalin, Mao, Pol Pot.... If there is no suitable quotation they invent fantastical ones from Lenin - we heard piles upon piles of them from senior Western figures, and always cited without chapter and verse.

And how they played with Khrushchev's phrase "We shall bury you...." (Incidentally, at his very first news conference during his visit to America in 1959, he was asked what he had meant by it. And he replied seriously to comments about his unsuitable jest: "My statement was deliberately distorted. It wasn't a question of who would bury whom, but of changes in the social system.... What I had in mind was that in the context of history capitalism would be buried and replaced by communism." That did not help. The phrase is still quoted to prove the blood-thirsty intentions of the terrible Bolsheviks.)

And how many times at news conferences in Washington were our representatives nonplussed by one particular question, not because it was a difficult one, but rather because it seemed elementary: "Don't Communists in their speeches speak of the coming victory of communism on a world scale?" That well-known rhetorical phrase expressing the faith of Communists in the ultimate triumph of their ideals regarding a socio-economic system serves as irrefutable proof of nothing less than Soviet plans for world domination! That is the kind of substitution made. And then, on the basis of simple arithemtic - how many times a given Soviet leader used that phrase a conclusion is drawn about the stage at which the communist conspiracy and preparations for war now stand. It would be easy to dismiss that kind of logic as ridiculous. But one should not forget that what every schoolchild in this country knows is not self-evident to people in America - and they can all be said to live in an anti-communist province.

Time magazine's view of the Washington summit

Other events of the recent past were also used to consolidate anti-Soviet fortifications. On the eve of the Washington summit, each of the major TV networks recapitulated the history of past meetings for its audiences. And, perhaps unintentionally, they all produced the same version: 1955 - the Geneva meeting of Eisenhower-Bulganin-Eden-Faure; 1956 - the "events in Hungary" kill the Geneva spirit; 1967 - the Johnson-Kosygin meeting in Glassboro; 1968 - "events in Czechoslovakia" kill the Glassboro spirit; 1979 - the Carter-Brezhnev meeting in Vienna; that same year - Afghanistan. Put that way, only one conclusion can be drawn: that the U.S.S.R. is a dark aggressive force, which only needs summits to camouflage its true intentions.

A crude recapitulation, with cause and effect unconnected, but it would be shortsighted to underestimate this system of proving anti-communist tenets and understanding the harm they do.

We too perhaps should stop and consider more seriously how ideology and politics are combined, the foreign policy effect of postulates that are not based on concrete political analysis. And, of course, we have to take into account how our words and deeds will be understood by our neighbours, friends and adversaries. Since so many different people live in one world, it is essential to listen more closely to the world's heartbeat and more carefully check our revelations against universal human values. Without trust no comprehensive security system can be built, nor can we advance to a nuclear-free world.

The main secret

In the meantime, the West is shouting, with and without cause, that the Soviet Union is not to be trusted! That it is useless and even dangerous to reach any agreements with a country that cannot be trusted. That is the logic. The significance of the latest Washington summit does not only lie in the fact that a treaty, in many respects a model one, was signed in Washington, for the elimination of medium- and shorter-range missiles, but above all in the fact that the summit destroyed a number of medium- and shorter-range anti-Soviet prejudices. Not for nothing did this alarm American political fundamentalists.

The ultra group called the summit Pearl Harbor-87. They played on the actual dates (the Soviet leader arrived in America on December 7, and December 7, 1941, was the black night for the American Fleet.) But in playing on the coincidence of dates they revealed what they would have preferred to keep hidden - their fear of the very idea of any American-Soviet rapprochement and a terrible inferiority complex. The summit was ranked with America's greatest defeats even before it had begun.

According to the polls, Gorbachev collected almost as many points from the Americans as their own President. And that was when I heard Patrick Buchanan, a former Reagan speech-writer, urging his compatriots in his familiar forceful style on TV to find out who is responsible. One of the presidential candidates, the influential Senator Robert Dole, insisted on an end to the glasnost fever. A conservative newspaper observer declared that there should be "no more summits at home. Summits by all means, but in neutral places, preferably far away and with nasty climates." While his more energetic colleagues called for a mobilization against Gorbachev.

What were they so scared of?

The first nuclear disarmament treaty between the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. And the fact that it won't be the last. What scared them even more was the possibility of the "star wars" programme petering out.

But most of all they were scared by - dare I say it? - the fact that a Communist looked human. Because that, after all, was the top strategic secret that had been kept from the American public - that Communists are also people, and that the Soviet Union is a normal society. Thanks to TV, the Soviet leader in just three days entered American homes, and seems to have been accepted by them. And so the secret became public knowledge.

Another conclusion drawn from American sources. They feared the very thing Americans seemed to like most about the new Soviet policy of glasnost: the three "Rs" - reason, realism and reform.

Unwittingly, the best answer to the question of the day was given by a very conservative journalist who wrote that Gorbachev had a disarming smile.

But in a world where so many weapons have been accumulated, and where hostility and fear have reached critical levels, a disarming smile is, you will agree, exactly what is needed.

Washington - Moscow

Peace today means life tomorrow

Indian Vice-President SHANKER DAYAL SHARMA answers questions from New Times special correspondent in Delhi, Leonid Zhegalov.

N.T. Mr Vice-President, you are a leading Indian statesman of international standing, extremely active in the cause of peace and disarmament. From this standpoint, how do you assess the political significance of the Soviet-American Treaty on the elimination of their intermediate--range and shorter-range missiles?

Sharma. General Secretary Gorbachev and President Reagan have taken a very important step towards creating a world free of nuclear weapons and, in the final count, achieving complete and universal disarmament. The world needs such a step as never before. If I may permit myself an excursus into the past, India, on achieving political independence from the outset favoured disarmament. Mahatma Gandhi, the father of the Indian national liberation movement, and Jawaharlal Nehru, the first prime minister of independent India, exhorted us to spare no effort in the struggle for the twin goals of peace and freedom. And in her turn Indira Gandhi carried out their behest. Her dictum - unless there is peace today there will not be life tomorrow - is well known. In this context, General Secretary Gorbachev has put forward truly courageous initiatives. Realism has also triumphed in the corridors of power in Washington. It therefore follows from our national stand on the issue of peace and disarmament that we in India greet the Soviet-American agreement with great satisfaction.

N.T. India was the birthplace of the famous Delhi Declaration on principles for a nuclear weapon-free and non-violent world. How does the Soviet-American agreement accord with the spirit of the document?

Sharma. The Delhi Declaration answers to the aspirations of the peoples of the world, irrespective of their political convictions, religious faiths or the colour of their skins. The treaty signed in Washington likewise answers to these aspirations. In the eyes of the people of the planet, it therefore reflects the spirit of the Delhi Declaration, and contributes significantly towards its implementation. It is now to be hoped that we can look forward to new initiatives from the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. on the issue of disarmament. The peoples of the world, for whom the Delhi Declaration has become an imperative of international life, are hoping for rapid progress in limiting strategic arms.

N.T. India became a party to the Delhi Six, making a useful contribution in the field of disarmament. From this standpoint, how does she assess the Soviet-American Treaty?

Sharma. The initiatives of the Delhi Six were the result of concern for the fate of peace on the part of six countries on four continents. That is why the public in these countries is expressing comlete support for the results of the Washington talks. It is well known that the Delhi Six have also put forward concrete proposals in the field of arms reduction control. For this reason the ability of the two sides to reach a practical agreement in this sphere is a source of special satisfaction to us.

N.T. Mr Vice-President, you are chairman of the international jury of the Indira Gandhi prize for peace, disarmament, and development. The prize was recently awarded to Mikhail Gorbachev. What do you think about it?

Sharma. The Indira Gandhi prizes are awarded to prominent state and public figures who have made a notable contribution to the struggle for peace and disarmament, racial rights, a new international economic order, and to the enrichment of the human spirit. Mr Gorbachev has made creative and innovative efforts to achieve these goals. We are very pleased that our decision has coincided with the seventieth anniversry of the October Revolution, whose ideals, deriving as they do from Lenin's Decree on Peace, the Soviet leader is trying to put into force in the international arena. I'll let you into a secret. In India the hope is being expressed that the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU will come here in person to collect the award. ■

The spectre of neutralism or why Western Europe is jittery

ALEXANDER LEBEDEV

Whenever the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. succeed in reaching substantive agreement in the sphere of disarmament or there are signs of movement towards further understanding, Western Europe begins to get the jitters. This reaction, which Ian Davidson of the Financial Times described as nervous and infantile, was fully manifest in connection with the meeting between Mikhail Gorbachev and Ronald Reagan in Washington.

As a matter of fact, this sort of thing has happened before - in the early 1970s, for instance, when the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. signed the highly important SALT 1 and ABM treaties. And after Reykjavik, Western Europe was positively panic-stricken.

In his memoirs, Henry Kissinger noted this specific syndrome, a mixture of persecution mania and the inferiority complex, that afflicts the West European allies. In periods of aggravation, the former Secretary of State complained, they were wary lest Washington draw them into some sort of irresponsible venture, and with détente coming on, were scared of a Soviet-U.S. "condominium."

What is the explanation? Are the West Europeans alarmed by any easing of tension in the relations between the two powers? Does this in some way threaten the interests of Western Europe?

European fears

The prospect of Soviet-American agreement on the elimination of medium- and shorter-range missiles caused a flurry in some political circles of Western Europe at first. True, later on the West European members of NATO, at all the meetings of the bloc in November and December, formally supported the treaty. Moreover, they urged the American legislators, albeit reluctantly, not to drag out ratification. Indeed, they could hardly have taken any other stand considering that NATO members had at one time declared in favour of the "double zero." Torpedoing the treaty (say, through non-ratification) would therefore have had serious political consequences for them.

The INF treaty has revealed the different approaches to the matter.

In Paris, for instance, the right raised a hysterical howl: the Soviet Union is disarming Western Europe! Defence Minister André Giraud went so far as to compare the treaty with the Munich pact of 1938 which opened the way to nazi aggression.

The French minister can only be commended for not ignoring history. Regrettably, he draws the wrong kind of lesson from past experience.

Fortunately, few share this view. On the whole the West European governments support both the agreement reached and further Soviet-American steps towards reducing nuclear armaments. But only in principle and within definite limits. There is more or less unanimity as regards the 50 per cent reduction in the strategic offensive weapons of the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. But beyond that, as Margaret Thatcher, for instance, holds, there is no need to hurry. The French leadership takes the same view.

London and Paris reason thus: if reductions were to be continued beyond the 50 per cent cut, it would naturally become increasingly difficult for them to evade participation in the process. Today Britain and France can still say that their turn has not come yet, inasmuch as the Soviet (and the American) nuclear potentials are far greater than theirs. But if in the 1990s the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. (after the 50 per cent reductions) retain about 6,000 nuclear warheads each, the ratio will radically change. For at the present rate of modernization of their nuclear forces Britain and France would by the year 2000 have together at least two thousand nuclear warheads. Possibly even more, depending on the modification of the American Trident 2 system with which the British submarines and the French M-4 and M-5, which are replacing the M-20, are being equipped.

It may be objected that the British and French nuclear forces are independent of the United States. However, the degree of the independence of the British nuclear forces evokes ironic smiles both in Washington and in London (considering Britain's total dependence on the U.S. in the means of delivery, and not only in that). For Moscow, one thing is clear: these weapons, like the French, are targeted on Soviet territory.

Bent on excluding their own nuclear forces from any limitations, London and Paris display not the slightest interest in the speedy elimination of tactical nuclear weapons in Europe.

True, Bonn takes a stand of its own on this question, and quite understandably since in the event of a conflict most of these warheads would explode on German soil.

What arguments are most frequently advanced against the "third zero" for retaining battlefield nuclear weapons in Europe? As a rule, the following.

Argument 1: without nuclear forces Western Europe would be defenceless in face of the "overwhelming preponderance" of the Warsaw Treaty states in conventional weaponry and armed forces, and also in stocks of chemical weapons.

Argument 2: the withdrawal of all American nuclear warheads from Europe would mean driving a breach between the West European defences and the United States. Incidentally, it transpires that the American Pershing 2s and cruise missiles were deployed not in reply to the Soviet SS-20s (ss was previously maintained), but in order to ensure linkage between the American and West European forces. How did the Europeans manage to hold out before without that linkage, prior to 1983, one wonders?

There is another, non-military, argument: without the nuclear umbrella Western Europe might become completely dependent, politically and economically, on the Soviet Union. Moreover, of late this danger has increased, they say, as a result of the "Gorbachev effect," perestroika and democratization in the U.S.S.R.

Defenceless Western Europe!

As regards the danger of its defences being severed from the United States, both President Reagan and other American officials have given the assurance that nothing of the kind will happen. Why not believe them? Moreover that assurance is guaranteed by the fact that apart from the preservation in the foreseeable future of American tactical nuclear weapons on European soil (about 4,500 units) there still are more than 300,000 American servicemen stationed here. Although former F.R.G. Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, for instance, confidently says that nothing terrible would happen if the American forces left the continent.

Joint French-West German manoeuvres are called upon to cement Paris-Bonn axis.

Now about the "overwhelming" Warsaw Treaty preponderance in conventional armed forces and armaments against which Western Europe can supposedly defend itself only with nuclear weapons.

The abundance of often contradictory evaluations of the ratio between the forces of the two blocs has confused many an experienced commentator. Neal Ascherson of the British Observer recently wrote of his puzzlement on this score. In June 1986, he writes, the Times reported that NATO had 5 million men under arms and the Warsaw Treaty countries, 6.4 million. Two days later the Daily Telegraph spoke of 2.29 million servicemen on the NATO side and 2.8 million on the Warsaw Treaty side. In March this year the Independent put the figures at 5 million and 6.2 million respectively. As regards tanks, the Independent mentioned the figure 20,300 on the Western side and 46,000 on the side of the East. And the Daily Telegraph on the very same day maintained that NATO had 9,000 tanks and the Warsaw Treaty states, 22,000. And so on and so forth.

Moreover those who juggle with figures are supremely confident of being able to do so with impunity; they know that no self-respecting Soviet military leader, brought up in the tradition of defence of a "beleagured fortress," will try to persuade the West that our army is not as strong as its potential enemy imagines. (After all, secrecy can sometimes also be a "deterrent.")

Of course, there are in the West authoritative institutions and experts who give more or less objective appraisals of the correlation between the armed forces in the European theatre.

For instance, a recent report issued by the West German Social Democratic Party, pointed out that the numerical superiority of the Warsaw Treaty states is arrived at through incorrect methods of comparison. The NATO generals systematically "forget" to include in the numerical strength of the West the 250,000 French troops and also the Spanish army. Formally, this is understandable, for neither country belongs to the NATO military structure, but for the Warsaw Treaty countries these are two excellently equipped armies and not tin soldiers. Besides which it is quite clear on whose side they are.

The Western European Union (WEU) has just put out a report that has caused dismay and irritation in NATO quarters. And no wonder: it contains no mention "twofold" preponderance in tanks is purely formal: 41 per cent of all NATO tanks minimum necessary for attack) of the Warsaw Treaty over NATO. And the "twofold" preponderance in tanks is purely formal: 41 per cent of all NATO tanks are models of the 1980s, whereas the Warsaw Treaty armoured force still includes many obsolete types and only 24 per cent were produced since 1970. At any rate that is what the compilers of the report say.

They also note the obvious superiority of NATO in anti-tank weapons and aircraft. Moreover the authors of the report consider the data on the arsenal of Soviet chemical weapons to be grossly exaggerated. The WEU concludes that "widely accepted statements of the West's hopeless disadvantage in conventional forces, or claims that Europe by itself is helpless before the Soviet threat are dangerous nonsense."

In general, Western Europe, with its population of 374 million, 100 million more than that of the East, and a considerably higher GNP, is not the poor defenceless orphan it is made out to be.

But let us assume what is highly improbable - that the Warsaw Treaty Organization is in every respect so much superior to NATO that from the standpoint of formal military logic it is capable of launching a sudden offensive.

For what purpose? To capture the little that would remain of Westen Europe after the monstrous destruction wrought by hostilities? If the Soviet Union were really to embark on such an insane venture it would surely not be deterred by a few nuclear "warning shots," which, moreover, would most likely hit West European territory?

Besides, it is common knowledge that it would be enough to destroy only a few atomic power stations to make that territory uninhabitable for a long time to come.

Former NATO supreme commander in Europe Bernard Rogers did not venture to claim that an invasion from the East was a real threat. He saw the threat in something else - in the Soviet Union allegedly being able without firing a single shot to bring Europe to its knees by blackmail, by intimidating it with the "gigantic" military might of the U.S.S.R.

But if all these years the Soviet Union - according to NATO logic - enjoyed superiority, why has it never tried to make use of it?

It is another matter that where real and not imaginary assymetry exists it should be done away with. The Warsaw Treaty Organization proposes that this should be discussed, that the military doctrines of the two blocs be compared so as to be assured of their defensive character, and the structure of their armed forces, especially in zones where they adjoin, brought into line with purely defensive needs, and cut substantially.

Incidentally, West European leaders admit that if disproportions are done away with, the turn of the battlefield nuclear weapon will come. Let's hope it's not mere wishful thinking.

Here, too, the question of the role of nuclear deterrence arises.

The views voiced in Western Europe on the role of nuclear weapons in safeguarding security are by no means identical. Moreover of late the differentiation has become more marked, especially in connection with the INF treaty.

In France President François Mitterrand has voiced strong support for the Soviet-American treaty; the position taken by Prime Minister Jacques Chirac is sceptical, while that of Defence Minister André Giraud, as we have seen, is frankly hostile. Nevertheless all three are unconditionally in favour of building up and modernizing the French "strike force" and opposed to the removal of all nuclear weapons from Europe. On the other hand, growing sections of the French public are having doubts as to the expediency and reliability of "nuclear deterrence" and are in favour of France joining the disarmament process. The one-time "nuclear

consensus" is clearly breaking down.

In Britain, alongside the "pro-nuclear" government, a powerful anti-nuclear opposition has emerged - Labour, the trade unions and the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament.

The F.R.G. contributed to the conclusion of the INF treaty. However, the positions of the war office (Manfred Wörner) and the foreign ministry (Hans-Dietrich Genscher) are far from identical. The former is a zealous proponent of strengthening the NATO "nuclear deterrent," while the latter is in favour of safeguarding security primarily by political means and the elimination of mass destruction weapons in Europe through negotiations on the reduction of nuclear and conventional armaments. Chancellor Helmut Kohl stands somewhere in between. A constructive programme of disarmament is advanced by the Social Democratic Party and the Greens.

Both in Britain and the F.R.G. committees of independent experts, consisting of representatives of different parties and scientists, have for several years now been working on the concept of a non-nuclear, non-offensive, reasonably sufficient "alternative defence."

The coming reduction in the nuclear potentials of the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. has given added impetus to debates in West European political circles on ways to ensure security.

Some are feverishly searching for ways of circumventing the INF treaty, devising "compensatory" variants through modernization of tactical nuclear armaments, and building up nuclear air force.

There is also another trend: the Soviet-American negotiations have given a new spur to the long-standing tendency towards strengthening the "self-reliant" defence of Western Europe that would be independent of the United States.

The many "voices" of Europe

Diverse projects for West European integration in the military sphere have been advanced time and again. Now in the form of strengthening the European section of NATO - witness the emergence of the bloc's Eurogroup in 1968. Now in timid attempts to give a military dimension to the EEC. Now within the WEU framework.

Gradually the choice appears to be inclining towards the Western European Union. This organization, which was founded in 1955 but which, with the exception of a few brief periods, played no significant role in European affairs, is now being revived.

In comparison with other variants, the WEU has many advantages: it comprises France, who withdrew from the NATO military structure in 1966, none of its members are neutral, it is smaller than NATO and the EEC (seven members as against sixteen and twelve respectively), and therefore more manageable.

France, the F.R.G., Britain, the Benelux countries and Italy are in favour of speeding up military integration within the WEU framework - although the degree of acceleration varies in each case. Jacques Delors, the French President of the Commission of the European Communities, has declared in support of these plans, regarding the WEU as a good link between the EEC and NATO.

The Hague session of the WEU Council held in October adopted a Platform on European Security Interests. It is based on a slightly amended version of a project advanced last year by Jacques Chirac.

The building of "European defence" has begun. Paris and Bonn, however, feel it is not proceeding fast enough and they have undertaken to accelerate the process. The F.R.G. and France are ahead of their EEC partners in many areas of cooperation, with the result that integration is developing, as it were, "at two speeds." Clearly the British, like the Greeks, the Spaniards and some others, are none too pleased by such a development, not wishing to be classed among the "second-rate" countries, Particularly now when that development has extended to the military sphere.

January 1988 will see the 25th anniversary of the treaty between France and Federal Germany signed in Paris in in 1963 by Charles de Gaulle and Konrad Adenauer. The treaty put paid in a way to the long-standing enmity. De Gaulle deemed it necessary to press for it, for a number of reasons: London rejected nuclear alliance with Paris in favour of the U.S.; Paris claims to an international standing equal to that of the U.S. were turned down by Washington; France's EEC partners did not support the French plans for a political alliance on the basis of the Common Market.

Much water has flowed under the bridges since then: the alignment of forces both on the world arena and in Western Europe has changed. Sharp contradictions have flared up more than once between France and the F.R.G., and the military articles of the treaty were forgotten. Today they are being reanimated, and the jubilee will be marked by the creation of a Franco-West German "defence council" and the formation of a joint brigade. It is said that the French Hades tactical nuclear missiles which are to replace the Plutons will be placed at its disposal under a system of joint control.

Talks on intensifying military cooperation, including cooperation in the nuclear field, are underway also between Paris and London. André Giraud has proposed to his opposite number George Younger that monthly consultations be held, as if this were an emergency situation. In London there are active advocates of extending Anglo-French cooperation in the nuclear sphere, all the way to combining their nuclear submarine fleets. But Britain's hands are tied by an agreement with the United States which forbids the sharing of nuclear secrets with third countries. However, times are changing. If the 50 per cent reduction in U.S. and U.S.S.R. strategic weapons goes through, who knows but what Washington may have second thoughts about the expediency of continuing cooperation with Britain. Something of the kind almost happened at one time - when President Kennedy's advisers tried to persuade him to let the British nuclear forces "die a natural death." Were this to happen, nuclear cooperation with France would be on the agenda for London.

François Mitterrand and Helmut Kohl: consolidate bilateral military ties.
From Time (U.S.A.)

But London, for diametrically opposite reasons, is opposed to the Franco-West German experiment on the grounds that it sows confusion, distracts attention from NATO, and also from the realization of the WEU platform, which Britain regards primarily as a means of strengthening the "European mainstay" of NATO.

In other words, one can visualize a situation in the future when there would be formed an independent West European military structure based on the WEU, with its own "nuclear force" controlled jointly with the F.R.G.

Of course, projects are one thing and their realization is quite another. Italy, for instance, is anything but enthusiastic about the prospect of participating in a new military structure formed under the direction of Paris and Bonn. Spain (not a WEU member), on the contrary, has evinced interest in the idea of joining a Franco-West German military alliance, counting to take the edge off the anti-NATO and anti-American sentiments in the country.

London, for diametrically opposite reasons, is opposed to the Franco-West German experiment on the grounds that it sows confusion, distracts attention from NATO, and also from the realization of the WEU platform, which Britain regards exclusively as a means of strengthening the "European mainstay" of NATO.

As for Washington, its position is clearly changing. Formerly any West European preoccupation with the idea of military independence met with a sharp rebuff from over the ocean. Today the U.S. attitude to both the Franco-West German project and the Hague decision of the WEU appears to be quite benevolent, probably as a surest means of bringing France back into the West's military fold, which, incidentally, it has never left completely, and make West Europeans shell out for military purposes.

How are we to react to all these projects? With indifference? Hardly, because they have a direct bearing on the European climate in general. Pour anathema on them? That is not likely to be effective, rather the reverse. We did try at one time to persuade ourselves and others that the WEU was stillborn, had no future.

The WEU is a reality and has to be taken for what it is, and, for one thing, contact with its bodies established (such contact has already been established with the WEU Assembly) and conduct a serious dialogue on European and world security.

The striving of the West Europeans to increase their independence vis-à-vis the U.S.A. through their own military integration is a reflection of many objective and subjective factors. So, it should not come as a surprise when an Italian Communist submits a resolution on consolidating "European defence," meaning that "far from always and everywhere" West European and U.S. interests coincide. Incidentally, that reminds one of Adenauer's pronouncements.

Some see in a West European military structure a possible substitute for NATO, believing that the alliance is in its death throes. Opinion polls show that a lesser part of West Europeans favour maintaining military ties with the U.S. Others hold that the WEU is a convenient means for coordinating the position of the West Europeans on fundamental military and political issues and exerting pressure on the U.S.A. Still others regard the WEU primarily as a place to work out a common stand towards the East. And there are those who consider it the optimal instrument for the conduct of military operations outside the geographical zone of NATO (the Persian Gulf is a case in point).

There is one more angle to this question. The activization of contacts between the F.R.G. and the G.D.R. caused quite some alarm in some West European capitals, especially Paris and London, where it was feared that things might reach a point when West Germany would be "neutralized."

So, Paris visualizes the French-West German alliance as a bridle for keeping Bonn in check. And Bonn's cherished dream appears to be the co-owner, together with Paris, of the nuclear missile.

It seems that the initiators of the WEU resuscitation do not yet clearly see what concrete forms its military-political activity will take, whether it will gradually incorporate all EEC members and the two structures will effectively merge or it will remain a core, an exclusive grouping.

No one would venture to predict all the possible vicissitudes ahead, including the likely struggle for leadership within the WEU, or how the joint armed forces of a number of West European countries now being formed will interact with the agencies of the Union. A great many other things are still unclear.

Need we be perturbed by the advent of a new "military threat" for us? I am certain that the Soviet General Staff did not panic on learning of the plans to form a brigade of two French and two West German batallions, to which possibly a Spanish and even a Belgian battalion might be added. Allowing the F.R.G. to participate in control over nuclear weapons is another matter. It is inadmissible in any form whatever. The Soviet Union has made this quite plain on more than one occasion.

What is puzzling is not the appearance of a new brigade, but the tenacity of the old thinking. And that is regrettable.

Scanning the West European press one rarely fails to find panicky calls to parry the new "Soviet threat" - the threat of the neutralization of Western Europe. It looks very much as if what is feared now is not so much the "spectre of Communism" as the "spectre of neutralism" haunting Europe.

No mention is made of exactly what horrors neutralization is fraught with. Would it mean dissolving NATO? But the U.S.S.R. and its allies are ready on a reciprocal basis to dissolve the Warsaw Treaty Organization, thereby in a sense, neutralizing themselves. Or perhaps "neutralization" implies doing away with the hostility to the socialist countries of the continent implanted by the right-wing political forces in Western Europe?

"Indeed, there are some on the conservative side of the political spectrum in Western Europe who would welcome the failure of Mr Gorbachev's reforms if only to regain the convenient, unifying threat perception of the past," Christoph Bertram, former director of the London International Institute for Strategic Studies, writes in Foreign Affairs.

There are, however, other forces as well. As Italian Socialist leader Bettino Craxi has pointed out, "our Europe is not threatening anyone, and neither does any threat emanate from Eastern Europe."

Then why should the political and economic integration of Western Europe be supplemented with a sort of modern West European version of the Maginot Line? I do not question the right of Western Europe to attend to its defence capability on an individual or collective basis.

Today the effective search for safeguards of national security should be conducted primarily on the plane of reducing the existing arsenals and working out political guarantees of universal security, with the establishment not of a balance of strength but a balance of interests as the objective.

True, many politicians in Western Europe are convinced that once Soviet-American negotiations are relatively successful it is essential to close ranks (in the military sense as well) so that the "superpowers" should have more respect for the positions and interests of the Europeans.

The desire of Western Europe to "speak with one voice," as de Gaulle put it, in order to be heard both in Washington and in Moscow is understandable. But it should not be forgotten that in formulating his concept of a future Europe, de Gaulle was speaking of a Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals, on the basis of détente, concord and cooperation.

Moscow bears this in mind. In his talk with Mrs Thatcher on his way to Washington Mikhail Gorbachev assured the Europeans that not a single agreement detrimental to the interests of Europe would be concluded. And indeed, East and West Europeans were consulted thoroughly at all stages of the drafting of the INF treaty.

So, is it not high time the West Europeans joined more vigorously in the dialogue on problems of international security, instead of exaggerating their worries and apprehensions about the intentions of the two "superpowers," and advance substantive ideas on arms cuts rather than buildup? This, more than anything else, would enhance security and trust in Europe and, for that matter, would help to overcome "the fear of ghosts" and "West European inferiority complex." If there is any. ■

Prisoner No. 220/82

BORIS ASOYAN

Efforts to erase his name from the popular memory have been futile. Not even the thick prison walls behind which Africa's hero Nelson Mandela has been held for a quarter of a century have been of any use.

Nelson Mandela was destined to be a legend in his lifetime, a symbol of the liberation struggle of millions of black people, and set an example of boundless dedication to the ideals of justice, of almost martyr-like self-sacrifice. People of his kind were described by Herzen as single-minded, totally committed, "motivated by one great idea, possessed of one great goal, people with gentle hearts and wills of iron."

Esteem for the fighter for justice grew throughout the years he spent in prison. When deputies to the "white" parliament were elected in South Africa in 1987, the newspaper Sowetan, which appears in the black township of Soweto near Johannesburg with its population of two million, suggested that its readers compile their own list of presidential candidates. Most named Nelson Mandela.

Mandela also commands great respect in the white community. Some regard him as the only person capable of arresting the violence and launching the process of South Africa's peaceful transition to justice. He is our last hope, Helen Suzman, who represents the opposition Progressive Federal Party in parliament, once said.

Sharpeville shooting

Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela was born in Transkei on July 18, 1918. By African standards, he was born to luxury, as his father was a chief, a prosperous man. The boy's path in life seemed predetermined: a missionary school after his initiation rites, Fort Hare College which admitted Africans, marriage and the pursuit of the affairs of his tribe. His life would have taken this course had it not been for his wilful and independent nature.

He complied with 50 per cent of his father's request, and entered Fort Hare College, although he did not study there for long. He was expelled for organizing a student boycott. Another student, Oliver Tambo, was expelled along with him. Since then Oliver Tambo has been his associate in the liberation struggle and was later to be elected president of the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC).

Nelson Mandela joined the ANC in 1944 and soon became one of its leaders.

Many might have thought that this young giant, self-assured, obstinate and impetuous, always steeped in extraordinary ideas and always inventive, was no more than the frivolous and spoiled son of a chief, who would sooner or later have done with his youthful follies and come to his senses. But his unflinching and passionate determination to achieve his goal was already evident. The goal for the sake of which he chose the path of extreme hardship was the freedom of his people.

The extraordinary qualities of the young leader won him friends, and at the same time attracted the attention of the authorities, who tried to do their utmost to reduce him to silence.

A suspended sentence of nine months' imprisonment was passed on him in 1952 for organizing a disobedience campaign in protest against the apartheid laws. On December 11, 1952, that sentence was followed by the deprivation of civil rights and restriction to Johannesburg. In September 1953, his deprivation of civil rights was extended for another two years. He wrote this in his notes at the time: "I found myself restricted and isolated from my fellowmen, trailed by officers of the Special Branch wherever I went....I was made, by the law, a criminal, not because of what I had done, but because of what I stood for."

Those were the years when former colonial empires were losing their possessions in Africa, one after another. The wind of freedom was blowing ever stronger, and fresh hope was being kindled in black Africans. The apartheid state constantly introduced new discriminatory laws, and reprisals became increasingly brutal. Their culmination was the use of live ammunition by the police against a peaceful demonstration of Africans in Sharpeville in June 1960. As many as 69 people were killed and 176 wounded.

Nelson Mandela the day before his last arrest. Now he is 69.

TASS photo

By that time the ANC had the experience of nearly 40 years of non-violent resistance, stemming largely from Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy. But such methods of struggle could not halt apartheid.

Violence had become the government's standard practice.

And Africans had to counter it with violence.

"In my mind, we are closing a chapter on this question of a non-violent policy," Mandela declared on May 30, 1961.

And six months later the South African newspapers raised a storm over what had hitherto been unheard-of: raids on government offices and production facilities,

destruction on a considerable scale. The previously unknown organization, Umkhonto we Sizwe (the Zulu for "Spear of the Nation"), claimed responsibility. Nelson Mandela had commanded units of raiders.

For two years he evaded arrest. He became as skilful in the use of make-up as a professional actor. Sometimes even his wife Winnie failed to recognize him. In that period he illegally went abroad and travelled in several countries, Europe included. Everywhere he asked for support, funds and arms.

His requests went unanswered in the West.

On August 5, 1962, Nelson Mandela was arrested in Natal Province on a tip-off from the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency. On that day he was heading for the town of Howick in the guise of a white's chauffeur. A CIA agent working under cover afforded by the U.S. Consulate in Durban had information about his itinerary. Having consulted Washington, he proposed a deal to the South African police: information about Mandela in return for information about the structure of the bantustans. The authorities promptly agreed as the information sought was not classified and was to be made public shortly. The court sentenced Mandela to five years' hard labour on Robben Island, in the most horrible prison in South Africa.

A new trial was held a year later. Mandela and his associates were charged with high treason and sentenced for life.

Life imprisonment plus five years. Nelson Mandela was 69 last July. Thirty-four years ago he was deprived first of civil rights and then of freedom.

"I care for your freedom"

It was quickly discovered that Mandela in prison was no less formidable an adversary than Mandela at large. Pretoria has repeated the mistake of the colonial regimes that sought to deprive peoples of their leaders.

It will be recalled how much trouble the imprisonment of Mahatma Gandhi caused the British in India's last years as a British colony. When Jomo Kenyatta was jailed, his popularity grew so much that people came from the remotest places in Kenya just to stand for a time near the prison where he was being held. The struggle for Zimbabwe's independence became more acute over the many years that Robert Mugabe and Joshua Nkomo were kept in Rhodesian jails.

In the case of Mandela, the regime landed itself in a very complex and awkward situation. On the one hand, Mandela's liberation is constantly demanded by virtually all countries, including South Africa's main trading partners, and South Africa can ill afford to ignore their demand.

On the other, to release Mandela and commute his sentence would amount, at the very least, to admitting to judicial error and, at most, to recognizing the illegality and arbitrariness of the apartheid system. Such a decision would almost certainly cause an intensification of the actions of the right-wing extremists in the white community, whose influence has already increased dramatically following the May 1987 elections to the "white" parliament.

And another thought is constantly gnawing at the Pretoria rulers: Mandela is advancing in years. And the law formulated by the Danish philosopher Kierkegaard will immediately go into effect if he dies. "When a tyrant dies his rule ends, when a martyr dies his rule begins."

In 1969, attempts were made to persuade Mandela to give up the political struggle and reconcile himself to a quiet life in Transkei bantustan, where he would enjoy freedom. Such proposals were made to him more than once. After another such attempt in 1985, Mandela dispatched a letter from prison, calling on the people to continue the struggle and refuse to be taken in by the rumours that he was about to come to terms with the authorities.

"I cherish my own freedom dearly, but I care even more for your freedom....Your freedom and mine cannot be separated," he wrote.

After each refusal by Mandela, the authorities invariably displayed extreme irritation and sometimes, going too far, made irresponsible statements. P.W. Botha made the following remark at a reception for diplomats in February 1987: "For all I care, Mandela can rot in prison till he dies, or till I die." These words found their way into newspapers and caused an uproar, and the President's office had to issue a denial.

Prominent American journalist Joseph Lelyveld is of the opinion that what is involved for Botha in this case is geography, not ideology. Had Mandela been born in another country, it would have been a different matter altogether.

Better late than never

But then, in August 1987, there was a report from Pretoria that Mandela might be unconditionally released. As if to confirm the authorities' new approach, a supporter of Mandela, Govan Mbeki, 77, was released from prison early in November after serving 24 years under the same sentence.

Signs of a reasonable approach to one of the key problems of present-day South Africa can only be welcomed. On the other hand, all this looks like an attempt to earn indulgence, avoid responsibility for the lawlessness and arbitrariness reigning in South Africa, and "let off the steam" from the boiling cauldron of the people's wrath.

Perhaps the ruling circles are now mainly motivated by fear that the generation of South African revolutionaries following in Mandela's footsteps will be less inclined to talk and will favour armed struggle against the aggressors.

The ANC has always been the force that sought to check the uncontrolled violence in black townships, and preclude actions that objectively conflict with the aims of the struggle against apartheid, reducing it to racial hatred.

It should be noted that fanaticism and an uncompromising stand are characteristic of those living in African townships in South Africa. The slightest deviation from the struggle for the rights of the native population is viewed as treason, and brutally punished.

It can be said that traitors to revolutions have always been punished. But we also know of examples when revolutions veered from their course as a result of unrestrained violence.

Incidentally, Nelson Mandela foresaw this danger a quarter of a century ago. He said that without the guidance and control of the ANC "there would be outbreaks of terrorism which would produce an intensity of bitterness and hostility between the various races of this country which is not produced even by war."

Back in 1961 he came up with the idea of a National Convention. "Such a convention would discuss our national problems in a sane and sober manner, and would work out solutions which sought to preserve and safeguard the interests of all sections of the population." It would work out "a new non-racial and democratic constitution."

25 years ago Mandela said that there should be no fears of "black racism," and that equal political rights should be granted to the black population. He stressed that this is the only course that guarantees racial harmony and freedom for all.

The Freedom Charter adopted at the ANC conference in 1955 remains to this day the only political programme that takes into account the interests of all groups of the population. It opens with the following words: "South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white."

* * *

International prizes are awarded annually to Nelson Mandela, prisoner No. 220/82. The world's greatest universities confer honorary degrees on him. Streets are named after him. Several books and a multitude of articles about him are published yearly. His name sounds increasingly often in the most important official premises in the world. A recently discovered particle of matter has been named after him.

Stevie Wonder, the popular American singer and composer, in a song dedicated to Mandela, demands that his jailers release this great son of Africa, and tells them that this is their chance of salvation.

It is immaterial whether the leaders of the white minority decide to take that chance or are compelled to do so. It is obvious that they have lost the battle against Nelson Mandela on every count. ■

READER'S VIEW

The only alternative

At last the day has come. SALT-1, SALT-2, Geneva, Reykjavik - these were all milestones on the difficult road. At the moment when Mikhail Gorbachev and Ronald Reagan were affixing their signatures, accompanied by the clicking of cameras, to the first-ever agreement to scrap nuclear weapons, even our kids - believe it or not, watched the TV with bated breath. They seemed to be aware, small as they are, that the event was going to have a direct bearing on their lives.

To our mind, all people of good will the world over can only share our feelings. At last the foundation has been laid! We have always believed in the firmness and perseverance of our leader. We saw how his logic, his open-heartedness, his sincere striving to get things moving in the sphere of nuclear disarmament, which appeared to have reached an impasse, were gradually melting the ice of mistrust and apprehension. A neighbour who dropped in, said: "It is the U.S. President who has changed." To my mind, this is not so. Most probably, the U.S. President is aware that the world in which we live has changed. It is not the Pentagon brasshats but the people both in the U.S. and here that decide how they want to live - in peace or in fear. Even presidents have to reckon with such a force.

A. BURLAKOV
Moscow, U.S.S.R.

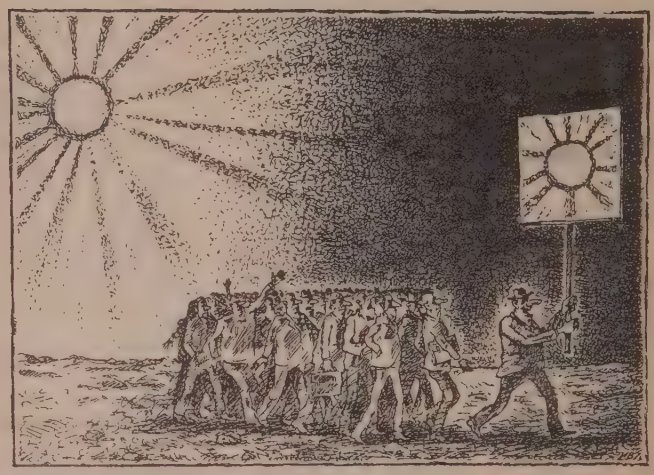
Hard even to imagine...

Of course, the Treaty on the elimination of intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles is a historic event, opening before the Soviet and American peoples the prospects of further cuts of the lethal weapons.

However, reading this document, you cannot but ask yourself the question: didn't we concede too much? After all, we scrap three times more missiles. Won't it affect our defence? And what about verification? It is needed, of course, but it is hard even to imagine a Pentagon inspector at the gates of Soviet plant.

N. SHEVTSOV
Kharkov, U.S.S.R.

AN ARTIST'S IMPRESSION



Bureaucracy - we all march together, but where!
Drawing by I. Smirnov

EYEWITNESS REPORT

The truth about Gleiwitz

Though 48 years have passed since then, I often recall that fatal day of September 1, 1939, when a provocative attack was made on the radio station in Gleiwitz, a town on the border with Poland.

In April 1939, when I was 21, I was called up to work on the home front and sent to Naumburg on the Kweise River, a small town in Upper Silesia. In May of the same year, after so-called basic training, we were sent to restore the slopes of the Kweise River. There was a railway station nearby. It was there that we saw how on some days up to eight trainloads of Wehrmacht troops departed for the East. We thought then it was merely a manoeuvre.

However, a great deal became clear to us in summer. We helped to reap harvest on the estate not far from Marklisse, where a Wehrmacht company was billeted. Their shoulder-straps were rolled up in such a way that it was impossible to determine what regiment they belonged to. In the yard of the estate I chanced upon a piece of a service list with the sign Meissen on it. I knew well that an artillery reconnaissance division was stationed there. This fact made all of us look truth in the face. We saw that these manoeuvres were not normal exercises, but a well-thought-out preparation for war. At the end of August we were transferred to Oppeln. On the evening of August 31, 1939, our unit was alerted. We were all literally squeezed into trucks and set off under police guard.

At dawn on September 1, on the day of Operation Gleiwitz, we left the trucks not far from the Polish border. We were forbidden to talk or smoke. As became clear later on, our task was to secure approaches for Wehrmacht troops moving towards the Polish border.

It was in those days that I became firmly convinced that contrary to the claims that Germany was being attacked by Poles, the truth was that the second world war was being unleashed by Hitler and the monopolists, who were out to secure new opportunities for their enrichment.

I would like to believe that today the people will not let themselves be deceived by claims that the socialist countries are a threat to peace.

Hans Resch
Dresden, G.D.R.

Growing pains of cooperatives

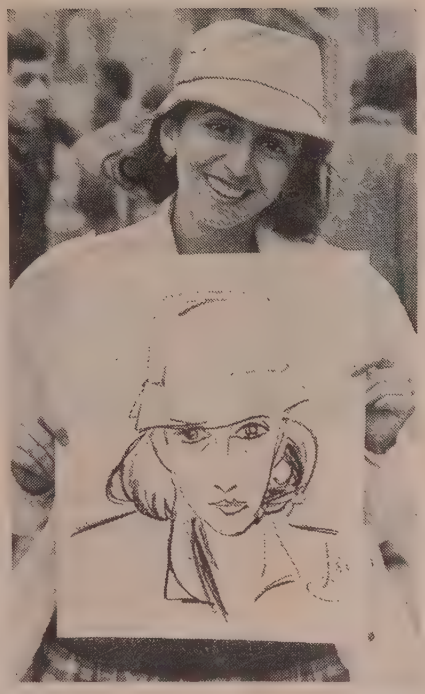
The cooperative movement is expanding in the Soviet Union. About 8,000 cooperatives have been formed throughout the country, with over 700 of them in Moscow. What services do they offer? The range is virtually unlimited: public catering and instruction in using electronic computers, private tailor's shops and workshops for the repair of domestic appliances and car tyres. Cooperatives also vary in size: from a tiny café manned by two or three persons to the giant cooperative "Acceleration." However, both large and small cooperatives have problems in common. What are they?

Who can afford such soup?

A cooperative is a socialist enterprise run on a self-supporting basis. As a rule, it leases its premises and equipment from the state. This is what has been done, for instance, by the Moscow café "Pokrovka." Electricity and gas are also supplied by the state.

A person taking up employment at the café signs a labour contract, exactly the same as that between a worker and a state-owned plant. As at any other socialist enterprise, whether a factory or a farm, the interests of each member of the work collective are defended and represented by a trade union. In the case under consideration it is the public catering workers' union. Each person employed by a cooperative has the right to a paid annual holiday and free medical care. A sick-leave certificate issued to an employee of the cooperative who falls ill will read: place of work - cooperative café "Pokrovka." The chief demand made on cooperative employees is that they work as much as is needed, and not specific hours. What happens if a member of the cooperative no longer suits its chairman?

"Not me personally," Sergei Svistunov, chairman of the cooperative café, interjected. "But a member who fails to handle his or her job properly well may not suit the cooperative."



Marina Simonian, a Tbilisi physician, seems to like this portrait drawn by young artist Giya Kemoklidze. Everyone can have the same pleasure. Young artists working outdoors on Sundays in the old part of Tbilisi will draw you for a moderate price.

TASS photo

What do people for whom such cafés are opened think of them?"

"When our café had just opened," Sergei Svistunov said, "people often dropped in not to order a dinner or drink a cup of coffee but to look around. Some would only open the door to shout: 'Capitalists!' or something of the kind."

"Why such hostility?"

"Perhaps the prices are high in our café. Far from all can afford the money. Or perhaps some think that all the money goes into our pockets. But I have no time to analyze what other people think of us. I have to do buisiness, work hard all the time, for otherwise we shall either be ruined or outstripped by our competitors."

"But let us return to prices. The menu is Ukrainian borsch (beetroot and cabbage soup), braised pork, vegetable salad and fruit water. The total price is six rubles. You will probably agree this is a very expensive dinner. Why so?"

"We work on a paying basis," Sergei Svistunov replied. "All financial operations, from the purchase of food to the payment of wages to the cooperative members, are our concern and ours alone. We buy the products at the market. A kilo of pork costs seven to ten rubles there. Beef is also dear, as are fruit and vegetables. All this has to be delivered to the café, and you have to pay for the transport too. Then you have to cook the dishes, and very well, using more butter and sour cream than at state-run cafés. Lastly, we have to pay tax to the state."

"What is the tax rate?"

"Three per cent of the net income. Electricity and depreciation charges come to 500 rubles a month. Everything that's left after all these payments makes up our total wage."

"How much do you earn?"

"About 450 rubles a month on average."

That is not a low wage, of course. For all his impassivity, the chairman did not refrain from reproaching us for showing petty interest in prices and wages. One of those present, a musician by profession, alarmed by the chairman's tone, interrupted to say that it was not good for us to inquire about such a trifle as money when people were working hard for 12 to 14 hours a day. No doubt, it is a difficult and serious business. Nevertheless, there is good reason for discussion.

Cooperatives in general, and cooperative cafés in particular, offer the population varied, primarily domestic, services. Cooperative cafés are supposed to provide quick service and good meals. What has in fact happened? A six-ruble luncheon - it is not accidental that we had luncheon, because people usually lunch every day - presupposes that a man who eats in a cooperative café must have a monthly income of about 500 rubles. Far from all have such an income today. In fact, people with such incomes do not

usually have difficulty in finding a place to eat.

In other words, cooperatives - and the cooperative café "Pokrovka" is a typical example - are today unable to solve the problem of an optimal combination of individual and public interests. Why?

Who calls the tune!

"Today the cooperatives are not allowed to have dealings with state-owned enterprises," said Boris Lakhmetkin, chairman of the cooperative "Komplex." "We have no right to sell our products to state-owned enterprises or to buy their products. We deal only with the population and public organizations, whereas we could do research and development work for state-owned enterprises at a much cheaper cost than similar work done by state-owned design offices. But we are not allowed to carry out such work because a plant is a state-owned enterprise. Extra government (and, therefore, public) money is being spent because of legal faults. Isn't it a paradox?"

All cooperatives have difficulties in getting adequate premises. Many of them do not have the grounds needed for production and are thus unable to work at full capacity. They are even ready to lease land from the state for the purpose of building production premises on it. But this problem remains unsolved.

The price formation is also paradoxical so far. This applies to raw and other materials and to retail prices. For instance, the cooperative "Symbol" makes sports shirts and jackets bearing the symbols of different Soviet sport clubs. They have a good sale at the "Spartak" and "Moskovsky" shops. The price was set at 35 rubles per item, but the cooperative is prepared to cut it to 25 rubles. However, the shops do not want to knock price down. The argument is as simple as a shirt. Since these goods are in popular demand the price must be raised to at least 40 rubles. The interest of the shops is easily understood, as they get a certain percentage from the sale, and the higher the price, the greater their profit. But the customer has to pay extra money.

In principle, state-run shops agree to sell cooperative-made products, but on tough terms: they may demand a flat 20 per cent concession, whereas the rate set for products manufactured at state-owned enterprises is no higher than 7.5 per cent.

Will the master be a real master!

So, let's sum it up.

Active people now have a legitimate right to initiative. Waste and mismanagement are ruled out in a cooperative. We have talked much about the feeling of being master which every working man must have in our country. Contractors and

Vello Ruutu, a Tallinn car mechanic, has plenty of work to do.

TASS photo

those who only carry out orders cannot have such a feeling. Only a man who enjoys the benefits of his labour, who is interested in working more and better, and who himself organizes his work can have the feeling of being master. Nevertheless, we do not yet feel the effect that was expected when cooperatives appeared. The consumer has not yet gained anything from them. Today cooperatives are more often criticized than praised. It is important to understand, however, whether the solution of this contradiction is a matter of time and experience, or whether some entirely new measures are needed so that the cooperative mechanism really can acquire an impulse for its development.

"As is well known, the new law revives a completely forgotten past," said Svetlana Glinkina, a research associate at the Institute of the economy of the socialist world system attached to the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences. "Cooperatives functioned effectively during the New Economic Policy in the 1920s. In those years they helped switch small commodity producers over to socialist economic management. But today, as we see, they have a different task. They have to help satisfy the increased and much more differentiated needs of Soviet people. The absence of flexible ways of meeting the people's requirements leads to the appearance of illegal ways. According to sociological reseach carried out recently, about 18 million people were engaged in unofficial public services in the Soviet Union in the early 1980s.

"Cooperatives help legalize this activity. As a result, the state has acquired a new source of budget revenue; consumers have received guarantees of quality and a degree of protection against illegal businessmen; and the cooperators have been given the legal possibility of earning incomes.

"The chief obstacle in the way of the growth and normal functioning of cooperatives is, in our opinion, the old concept of the economic mechanism. The cooperatives will justify our hopes only if the economic reform proves effective, if we consider and assess their practice taking into account the expected results of this reform. If the conditions are not changed the cooperatives will remain in the position of stepsons. What is one of the main arguments used against cooperatives? It is argued that state-owned enterprises may experience a shortage of manpower. Quite reasonable. But under the economic reform a state-owned enterprise will have greater freedom in the distribution of its wage fund, and will, therefore, be able to pay much higher remuneration for the work of people it wants to keep on its staff. Thus, this problem will also be solved. Cooperatives can play a positive role in the employment of redundant labour.

"High prices is one more argument used against cooperatives. There are quite a number of reasons here: the absence of the necessary subsystems serving the cooperatives. The transportation and delivery of goods, the money spent on mediators of all sorts - all this increases the price of the final product.

"I think," Svetlana Glinkina went on, "it is necessary to be bolder in forming cooperatives specializing in the sale of finished products. Such cooperatives are essential under the present circumstances. Nevertheless, the state is to blame too

for high prices. Government bodies do not control cooperatives even when dishonest profit is an evident fact. Take, for instance, the well-known shashlyk (mutton grilled on skewers) sold at 25 rubles a kilogram last summer. Such a price cannot be explained by overhead expenses or the fact that the meat was bought at the market at 8 rubles a kilo. A number of socialist countries effectively apply the law on dishonest profit, and a similar law could be applied in our country."

Learning by trial and error

Besides evident advantages, the method of trial and error brings with it evident disadvantages. Our cooperative movement today resembles a man groping in the dark. It is encountering problems which have already been solved.

But not any experience should be accepted unreservedly. As Leo Tolstoy said, one must take account of everything that has been done before, and go further. The neighbouring countries have gained interesting experience. For instance, in Hungary the state, allowing the cooperatives to work on the basis of free prices, publishes tentative prices that can be a little higher than state prices. Cooperatives that adhere to such prices are freed from numerous checks and inspections, which is very important for the normal functioning of a cooperative. In the German Democratic Republic, cooperatives operate on the basis of state prices and make profits thanks to quality and quicker service.

Thus, the regulation of price formation can in no way hurt the rights of Soviet cooperatives. For today they do not always earn money according to the work done. That would be so if their work was evaluated by a developed market, and not only their work but also that of all other economic organizations that satisfy consumer demand. Under the present system of price formation and huge shortages on the consumer market, a cooperator often finds a "gold mine" and makes a profit that does not correspond with labour expenditure.

The problem of taxation cannot be excluded from this chain of reasoning. There is much talk about it today. Some say it is necessary to take a differentiated approach to cooperatives. This seems to be reasonable. The incomes of some cooperators are several times higher than the incomes of others, and a two- to three-per-cent tax paid by them seems not to be enough.

Furthermore, if we want - and this is, of course, in our own interest - cooperatives to grow and new ones to appear, it is necessary to solve a number of other problems standing in their way. One such problem is the lack of premises. The other socialist countries have allowed cooperatives to use dwelling premises. Our cooperators should evidently be allowed to do the same.

The huge amount of papers of various kinds which a man wishing to run a cooperative must collect and present to the appropriate authorities is also one of the reasons impeding the establishment of cooperatives. Such a man might decide that this is a waste of effort.

All these problems have to be tackled. The expediency of setting up a cooperative should be decided by the consumer, as has been done in Hungary. Only, when competition between cooperatives begins, which is perhaps the most reliable guarantee of lower prices and better quality products, can we hope for a noticeable effect on their activity. This task can only be achieved when the whole complex of problems facing the cooperative movement is viewed in terms of their interrelationship with the economic reform.

Compiled by
ALEXANDER SIDOROV
and ANATOLY CHEBOTAREV

WORLD ECONOMY: FACTS AND FIGURES

Coffee-87

Coffee acounts for about 5 per cent of the capitalist world's export of foodstaffs, some 4 million tons in terms of volume. Sold in the world market is mainly Robusta, from which instant coffee is usually made, and high-quality Arabica.

Most of the exporters and importers are members of the International Coffee Agreement concluded in 1962, an organization which regulates the marketing by setting export quotas for the producers. These quotas are periodically revised depending on the level of prices and production.

In 1986-87 world production of coffee dropped down to 4.6 million tons, the main reason being the drought in Brazil. It had to cut its production by 58 per cent which had an immediate effect on world prices: in January 1986 they reached the highest level in nine years. However, after it had become clear that the drought in Brazil would not affect the supply in the world market, the prices began to fall. While in March last year a ton of coffee fetched 4,521 dollars, that is, almost 60 per cent more than the average over the preceding five years, in July it sold for 3,228 dollars and in December, for 3,011.

Alarmed by this sharp drop in prices, the producing countries intend to have it go up again by revising the export quotas. Another expedient - curtailing production - may also boost prices in this season. For all that, a rise in coffee prices is hardly likely. According to Western forecasts, in 1987-88 production will increase to nearly 6 million tons and exceed the demand by 240,000-336,000 tons.

COFFEE PRODUCTION (thous. tons)

	1983/84	1986/87*	1987/88**
Total	5323	4626	5868
Latin America			
Brazil	1800	834	2100
Colombia	780	660	642
Mexico	272	278	291
Guatemala	140	152	159
El Salvador	144	115	106
Costa Rica	124	139	138
Ecuador	83	136	117
Honduras	79	87	75
Peru	76	72	78
Nicaragua	43	41	41
Africa			
Côte d'Ivoire	85	240	270
Ethiopia	198	186	174
Uganda	162	162	168
Kenya	120	110	114
Cameroon	60	116	118
Zaire	81	103	110
Madagascar	66	66	69
Asia			
Indonasia	331	348	342
India	100	170	135

*Preliminary data. **Estimate.

A view from the fortress

FROM THE BLACK SEA TO THE ALPS

From our special correspondents
VLADIMIR GRISHNY and
LEONID KHARKOV

We were standing on top of the tower of an ancient fortress, the highest point in Belgrade. Below, encircling the city in an arc, the Danube flowed majestically. The cold wind was playing with the flags on ships' masts, rocking fishermen's boats and swaying the branches of thickset elms by the mooring.

"The river is a great blessing to my homeland, its ancient trade route," said our companion, writer Branko Kitanovic. "The Danube unites us almost with the whole of Europe, including Austria, the Federal Republic of Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria and the Soviet Union.

But the Danube has not always brought nations together. For centuries, it cleaved this land like a bleeding scar, with Western conquerors on one bank and Oriental Ottoman enslavers on the other. Romans, Byzantines, the Huns and crusaders went along the Balkan waterway, leaving smouldering ruins in their wake.... The hoary walls of this Belgrade fortress remember much, as do these Danube waters which have turned crimson more than once with the blood of Yugoslav patriots.

In September 1944 Soviet and Yugoslav troops linked up on the right bank of the Danube, where the Djerdap Hydro now stands, and on October 20 the battle to liberate Belgrade ended on the Danube.

"After 70 days of uninterrupted fighting to crush the mighty German defences, a red flag went up there," said Branko, pointing. "It is at these walls that a Soviet and a Yugoslav generals, V. Zhdanov and P. Dapcevic, embraced like brothers. I remember how in the evening the dark, mirror-like surface of the river sparkled with the reflections of fireworks in honour of the Soviet and Yugoslav liberators."

Long-awaited freedom came to Yugoslavia. But the Danube continued to be managed by imperialist countries located far from the region. The convention foisted on Bulgaria in 1921 by the United States, Britain and France remained in force. The Danube Convention ensured those powers not only economic, but also political domination on the Danube. They regulated shipping rules and collected navigation taxes every year (with the exception of the war years when the U.S., Britain and France, seeking to gratify Hitler, handed control over the trans-European river over to him).

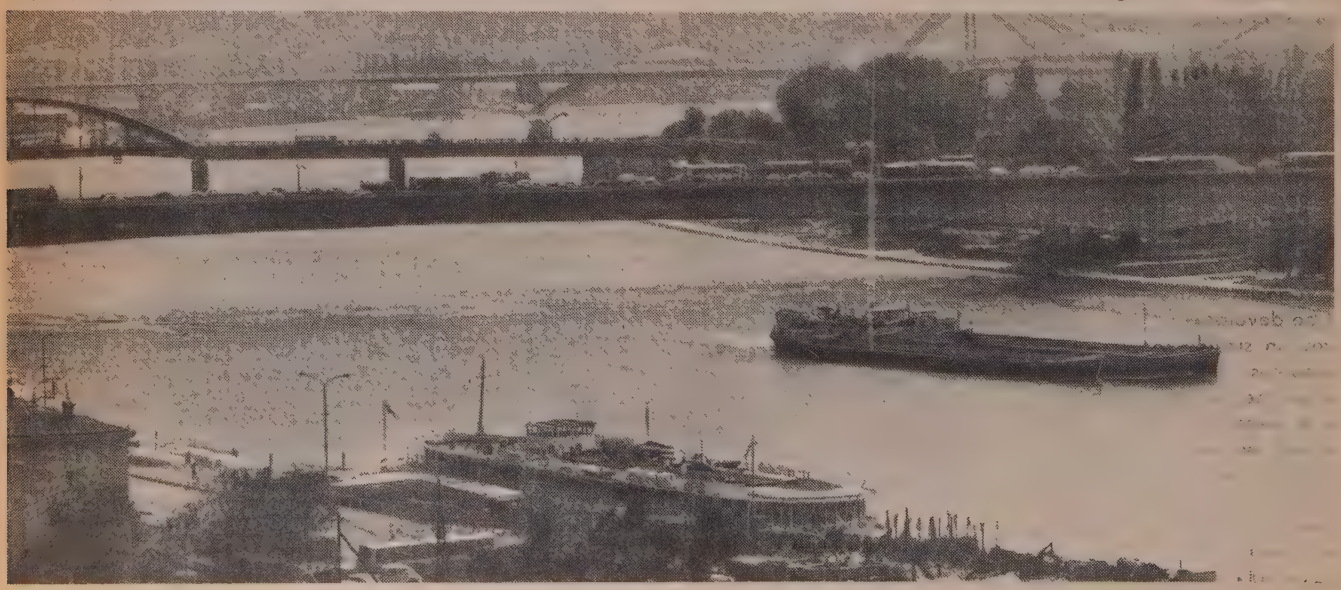
It was only natural, therefore, that after the rout of nazi Germany the countries situated along the Danube demanded a fair solution to the problem of using the major waterway. On July 30, 1948, representatives of East and West opened an international conference on the Danube in Belgrade. Pravda correspondent Yuri Zhukov was among the newsmen who covered it.

"Conference sittings opened in the morning and continued well into the night," the Soviet press veteran recalls. "The discussions were complex and tense. Gloomy Cannon, the U.S. State Department's specialist on the Balkans, nervous Sir Pick from London and the perpetually resentful Frenchman Thierry, who was compared by the British newspaper The Manchester Guardian to a bankrupt shareholder hoping to get at least sixpence for a one-pound share, renewed the debate on the 1921 convention four times, eager to prove its legitimacy. The delegations from the Danube countries, acting in a calm and dignified manner, offered well-argued reasons why that historically dead convention should not be seen as a document retaining any legal force. Even if the three powers had unilaterally arrogated the rights to the Danube, it was indeed only the Danube countries that were entitled to decide on the regime of navigation on the river. Cannon, Pick and Thierry were even asked by reporters at a press conference: 'What would you say if the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia demanded a mandate for shipping on the Thames, the Seine or the Mississippi?'"

"I still have my notes recording Cannon's speech," Zhukov says. "Referring to the U.S. 'Marshall plan' (a

For previous instalments see issues 33, 36, 39, 43, 47, 49.

The Danube in Belgrade.



programme for Europe's postwar development with U.S. "aid"), he attempted to substantiate Washington's 'rights to the Danube' as well. He pressed for permission for non-Danube shipping companies to set up agencies on the river and demanded the possibility for countries outside the region to engage in unrestricted economic operations on the waterway, including the establishment of 'free ports' and even 'free zones' on its banks."

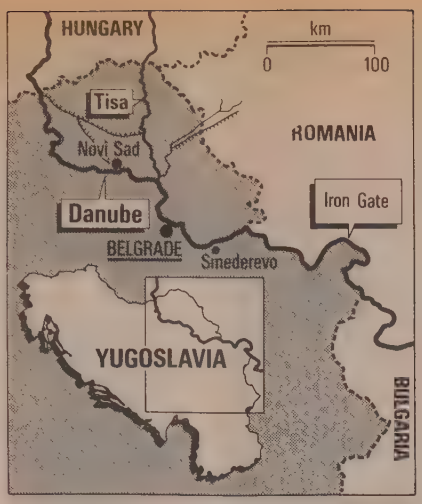
Cannon's colleagues - the representatives of Britain and France - made statements in the same vein. The gist of their demands was summed up at the time by the British newspaper The Observer: the Danube should be a wide window upon Eastern Europe, from which it would be possible to peek out and through which it would be possible to look. Why, for example, should the United States need to peer through that wide window? Was it, perhaps, for the purpose of using the river for mutually beneficial trade? But U.S. merchant ships had never sailed on the Danube and the sale of U.S. goods to Romania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and Hungary in 1937, or before the war, amounted (according to American press reports) to just 19 million dollars, or a mere 0.5 per cent of overall U.S. exports.

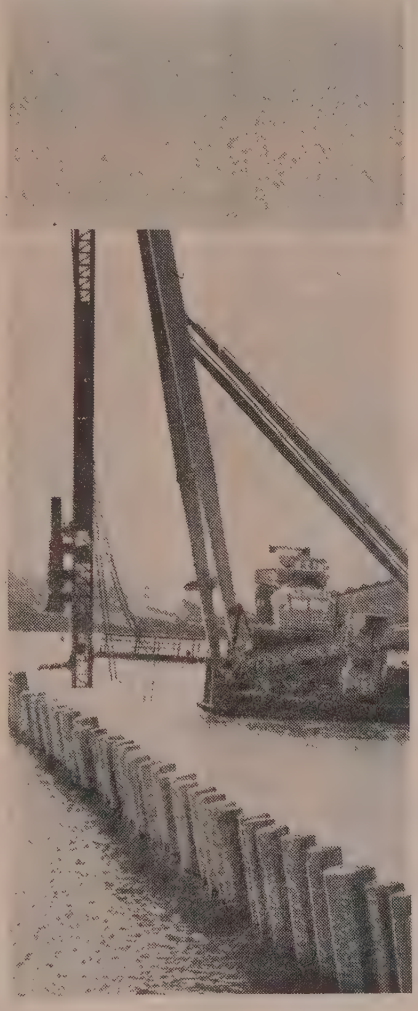
The United States needed a part in managing navigation on the Danube firstly in order to be able to interfere in the domestic affairs of the Danube countries. The same aim was pursued in claiming "the rights to the Danube acquired after World War I" by the representatives of Britain and France. Naturally enough, the delegations from the Danube countries rejected these solicitations.

The debates in Belgrade lasted for about a month. Notwithstanding obstructions by the representatives of the three Western powers, it proved possible to work out a detailed and fair Convention on the Shipping Regime on the Danube. It was based on the principles of free shipping for the Danube countries and unfailing respect for their sovereignty. The representatives of the U.S., Britain and France, however, refused to recognize the document and ostentatiously left Belgrade. The French newspaper France-Soir commented: "Henceforth the Danube will be in the hands of the Danube countries. The Danube match, which has lasted almost a whole century, is ending with victory for the East over the West."

●

During the years of popular government in Yugoslavia the riverside region began to be developed intensively. Cities there grew in size and the power-generating resources of the river, which had long served the people both as a waterway and as a means of irrigation, began to be tapped as well. The Yugoslav capital sprawled from the riverside hills to the bank of the Danube. New residential areas sprang up, well-appointed embankments were built and parks and sports grounds appeared instead of swamps.





Port facilities in the Soviet port of Reni are being built jointly by Soviet and Yugoslav builders.

From the fortress wall we could see the cranes of the new port. Ships large and small flying the flags of different countries were berthed at kilometre-long wharves, trans-shipment yards were filled with machinery, and battery-powered trucks were going in and out of huge metal storages... The port of Belgrade is among the largest on any European river.

The plains of Vojvodina - the nation's bread basket - spread along the left bank of the Danube. The vast lowland of Pannonia had long been famous for its fertile black earth. But it had been likewise notorious for its floods and frequent and severe droughts, making for low crop yields. For this reason it was decided as early as in 1947, so as not to leave the harvests on the 1.5 million hectares of arable land there to the mercy of fate every year, to build a Danube-Tissa-Danube canal.

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Novi Sad is the administrative centre of the socialist autonomous territory of Vojvodina. A white six-storey building there resembling a light-winged sailing ship houses the project building administration. Covering a whole wall in the director's office is a hydrographic map crossed by the blue line of the main canal. It starts from the town of Bezdan near the border with Hungary, runs across the whole Vojvodina plain and joins the Danube again close to the border with Romania. On the map the canal looks like an artery with numerous capillaries branching off.

The 930-kilometre first leg of the project, with 17 dams and dykes, 13 shipping locks, 3 pumping stations and dozens of bridges, has now been completed. A total of 130 million cubic metres of earth, or almost twice as many as were excavated during the construction of the Suez Canal, had to be moved. Some 700 million dollars were invested in irrigation systems alone. Some of the machinery used was Soviet-made, including power shovels, bulldozers and scrappers.

The bogs have now all but disappeared and water supplies to cities and villages have improved. Industrial centres have risen along the main and auxiliary canals. Nearly all major industrial cities in Vojvodina have an outlet to the Danube and thus to the Black Sea. The scheme has benefited neighbouring Hungary and Romania as well, as the Vojvodina canals drain surplus water from their fields.

"Having solved the problem of flood control, we have mounted an offensive against drought," says Yugoslav engineer Nikola Mirkov, who designed the Danube-Tissa-Danube project. "By 1990, Danube water will be used to irrigate some 100,000 hectares of arable land. This is a lot, considering the fact that we are in one of the last places in the world for irrigated acreage. Whereas, for instance, in Denmark the irrigated part of the land under cultivation stands at 15 per cent, in Romania at 22 per cent, in India at 24 per cent and in Bulgaria at 28 per cent, the figure in Yugoslavia is just two per cent. Meanwhile, the Vojvodina can be just as generous as the irrigated fields of the agri-industrial combines Tamis, Becej and

An old pier.

TASS photos

Belgrade, where wheat harvests of 5.5 to 6 tons per hectare of land have become a norm and where they bring in 7 tons of corn from a hectare."

Further large-scale investments are, of course, essential. The second phase of the project, however, is facing financial difficulties, due to the fact that the country's economy is going through a difficult period: growth rates have slowed down, inflation is continuing and prices are on the increase. The Yugoslavs are pinning great hopes on being able to attract capital from Western firms and expanding cooperation with a tried and tested partner - Soviet Selkhozexport. The question at issue, after all, is one of the major economic facilities in Yugoslavia, which will serve succeeding generations in this country as well....

Outside Belgrade the Danube splits into two roughly equal branches. From there it streams across Serbia, quickening its pace when it reaches the Iron Gate ravine. It takes an hour on a rapid Raketa hydrofoil from the Belgrade river terminal to the city of Smederevo. The largest factory there is a metal-making works built with the participation of the Soviet Union. Ships carrying the Soviet flag are to be seen at the port of Smederevo at almost any time: they bring iron ore and equipment for the second phase of the project. Ninety per cent of all freight coming into the city is from the Soviet Union. The river transport workers of Smederevo and Soviet longshoremen from the Danube cities of Reni and Izmail are bound by common interests. Yugoslav firms are taking part in the modernization of Soviet port facilities. It has been decided to build a new port at Smederevo. This will make it possible to boost freight turnover fivefold.

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While on the Danube, one cannot but feel the Yugoslavs' eager desire to protect and preserve the river.

This truly invaluable gift of nature is being exploited ever more intensively and the amount of industrial discharge into the river is growing catastrophically. Already, the threat of irreversible water pollution looms ahead. According to estimates by Yugoslav scientists, the river is now barely coping with the pollution by dint of self-cleaning. But for how much longer will its own resources last? It is difficult to say. Even today, the people of Belgrade are advised against swimming in the Danube. Once it was a custom amongst the peoples living along the river for couples in love to weave garlands of flowers and throw them into the water. Downstream, old hands could guess, by the garland's design, which country the luck-bringing gift had come from. We looked at the river as well.... Alas, the waters of the Danube were carrying a different kind of gift.

"The problem of cleaning up the river has to be tackled at international level, by common efforts," says Academician V. Petrovic. "There are, after all, tens of millions of people living on its banks. And the health of the Danube is the health of those millions. The first steps to protect the ecology of the Danube basin have already been made: it has been proposed to establish scientific centres in Belgrade and Budapest concerned with the questions of cleaning the river and making rational use of its waters. We believe that it is possible to return its former colour, purity and freshness to the Danube...."

The Danube. History and the present day. A river that has become a river of friendship and cooperation. How closely linked these two notions have become! How strikingly they confirm the correctness of the path of peace and concord, the path all mankind should take.

Belgrade

What did the participants in the symposium discuss in the old castle kindly placed at their disposal by the local Goethe Foundation? As was proposed by the sponsors, the main topic of the discussion was the present-day understanding of humanism, human rights and, particularly, the right to peace.

Some readers might raise their eyebrows at the mention of human rights, suspecting it to have been one more propaganda show of mutual recrimination. But they would be wrong. There was no noisy argument or mutual recrimination, though the symposium had brought together people with different outlooks, political views and temperaments.

The meeting in France confirmed once again that human rights can and should be discussed calmly, without laying too much stress on the issue in the hope of gaining a propaganda effect, or brushing it aside with smug complacency.

Human rights is, indeed, a serious contemporary problem. I would say it is one of those problems that are revealing their global character increasingly clearly, for the provision of the right to life - one of the basic human rights - calls for an increasingly cooperative effort by peace campaigners everywhere.

As Dr Rudolf Weiler of the University Centre for studying peace problems in Vienna, and a co-sponsor of the symposium, rightly noted in his opening speech, the future of mankind is not determined by social conditions alone. It also depends to a large extent on the behavior of people themselves, on their notions of what is moral and immoral in international relations. The exercise of the right to peace and, consequently, of all other human rights on a worldwide scale therefore represents a special problem, Dr Weiler stressed.

Peace and freedom

Lawyers in different countries have been arguing for many years as to which of the human rights are more important - personal or political, social or economic.

This argument is simply meaningless, Soviet professor Mikhail Krutogolov pointed out in his report. All rights are important, and violation of any of them is damaging to the system of rights as a whole. At the same time, Prof. Krutogolov said, "there is today a right which is unquestionably the most important, paramount and inalienable - it is the right to peace." In the present circumstances it must be linked with the right to life, development and a wholesome environment.

The interlinking of these rights seems especially reasonable in that a similar approach is to be found in a number of

Christians and Marxists in dialogue

EDUARD BATALOV

The 14th symposium "Christians and Marxists in Peace Dialogue" was held in Klingenthal near Strasbourg in the autumn of this year. As usual, it was sponsored by the Vienna-based International Institute for Peace, the Soviet Peace Committee, and the Institute for Peace and Understanding of the Catholic University of America. The participation in the symposium of philosophers, theologists, lawyers, religious figures and politicians from both German states, France, the United States, the Soviet Union, Bulgaria and other European countries, as well as a Vatican observer, once again confirmed the forum's international prestige.

international documents, in particular in the resolution "Human rights and scientific and technological development" adopted by the U.N. General Assembly on December 18, 1982.

Nevertheless, everything that has been said about the right to peace, Mikhail Krutogolov concluded, is "rather a statement of political positions and reasoning than legal arguments. None of the Soviet or foreign lawyers, none of the authoritative international bodies has as yet given a clear-cut definition of the right to peace."

It should be said that the participants in the symposium - West German politician Friedrich Baier, Hungarian theologian Botond Gal, Bulgarian professor Deyan Pavlov, Dr Schwarz-Liebermann von Wahlendorf from Hamburg, Dutch philosopher Ruurd Veldhuis, Anthony McNulty of the British Institute of Human Rights, Prof. Burghardt Koch from the German Democratic Republic, and others were unanimous in their desire for peace.

What are the political and moral foundations on which a stable peace must be built? Can one speak of the right to peace as a **right**? The various views expressed on this subject reflected both concern over the condition of man in both East and West and the fear of Western liberal intellectuals that the freedom and dignity of man could be sacrificed to the peace we so much desire.

Apprehensions of this kind were most clearly expressed in the report presented by Prof. Paul Peachey from the Institute for Peace and Understanding of the Catholic University of America. "Is peace a human right?" he asked in his report, and replied: "In principle, yes; in practice, not yet!"

We know from history, recent history too, Prof. Peachey said, that there have been different views on peace: some regarded it as prosperity, justice and the absence of violence, and others as pacification based on violence and the well-known principle "if you want peace, prepare for war."

It should also be remembered, Paul Peachey noted further, that, historically, the struggle for human rights, at least in the European tradition, has been stimulated by the concentration of power and the buildup of the coercion mechanism generated by the desire to bring about pacification. The point at issue is whether this problem can be resolved and, if it can be, in what way.

Drawing by I. Smirnov

The social processes maturing in present-day society, the American philosopher concluded, mean "the accelerating transformation of subjects into citizens and the increased appropriation of human rights. The challenge, of course, is not only the recognition of these rights, but also the nurture of accountability to and for the common good. If the elevation of peace as a human right that governments are to honour and secure is to succeed, vast reaches of human development have yet to be accomplished."

The way the problem is stated is difficult to deny. Peace can rest only on freedom, not on violence, on the actual provision and constant extension of human rights and not on restricting and discounting them. In this connection the Soviet participants in the symposium drew the attention of their Western counterparts to the Delhi declaration, which affirms the priority of universal values and unequivocally stresses the need to abandon the use or threatened use of force.

Many participants in the symposium were deeply convinced that the further extension of political democracy in the Soviet Union and other socialist countries as well as the successes of the working people of capitalist countries in the struggle for their social and economic rights would have a beneficial effect on the process of strengthening peace.

In his report at the symposium this author cited the words of the Russian writer Andrei Platonov. Uttered over half a century ago, they are amazingly relevant today. "Mankind is one breath, one live warm creature," Platonov wrote. "When it hurts one, it hurts all. When one dies, all die. Down with the mankind of dust, long live mankind the organism. Let us be humankind, not simply people taken separately."

But how can one feel a part of the organism, a part of mankind without being dissolved in it and losing one's individual merits? How can one preserve and defend his or her truth in the face of "universal necessity"?

It is clearly the complexity of these questions that explains why philosophers and theologians at the symposium heatedly discussed what principles should be taken as guiding ones to bring about harmony between individual, group, na-

tional and universal interests and values, and how to build a relationship between the individual and society.

Ideological differences between the participants in the symposium were perhaps most clearly revealed in this debate. Nevertheless, all of them agreed that the development of the individual and the guaranteeing of human rights are an essential condition for the progress of society, that new thinking can be drawn only from the generalized experience of many nations, groups and politicians, that peace can be secured only by joint efforts on the part of government and non-government organizations and movements, and that the church, especially the Christian church, is today playing a very important role in these efforts.

The last-mentioned idea was heard distinctly in the speech of Agafangel, Archbishop of Winniza and Brazlaw, who represented the Russian Orthodox Church at the symposium. "The future of mankind can be guaranteed against total catastrophe only when the peoples, having forgotten the strife between them, overcome the barriers of mistrust and open an era of mutual understanding," he said. "The common danger of annihilation is likely to enhance awareness of the common destiny of mankind. Today it is not enough to think in terms of the interests of one country, one state, or even a region or a bloc. It is necessary to rise to the level of universally necessary and acceptable understanding of the global destiny of mankind. The idea of peace is becoming the most general moral criterion for all peoples, all sections of the population, irrespective of their ethical or political views."

The participants in the symposium were also almost unanimous in the opinion that the right to peace should be further studied, and not only from the purely legal but also from the philosophical point of view. They backed the proposal submitted by Prof. Krutogolov on behalf of the Soviet delegation to establish on the basis of organizations conducting Marxist-Christian discussions a composite research group that would ultimately define the right to peace and define it scientifically.

This would be a practical contribution of Marxists and Christians to the cause of peace. The initial results of the work of the group could be discussed at next year's symposium which, the Soviet Peace Committee proposed, should be held in our country.

"The word of the year"

It can be said that the Klingenthal symposium, like other meetings of its kind, consisted of two parts. The official discussions were supplemented by conversations at the common dinner table or over a cup of tea, or strolls about the small neat Alsatian town enjoying the bliss of autumn. During such informal contacts people become more keenly aware that they have similar destinies, concerns and hopes, and usually ask each other about what worries them most of all.

The day after the symposium opened it became clear to us in the Soviet delegation that the participants from other countries were especially interested in two questions. The first question concerned the activity of the Russian Orthodox Church, preparations for the 1000th anniversary of the baptism of Rus, and the government's attitude to this event. With the affability characteristic of him, Archbishop Agafangel gave a detailed answer to this question.

But, as was expected, participants from other countries were interested most of all in the progress and future of perestroika. "Perestroika has become the word of the year," a West German participant noted. "And though it is your domestic affair, the consequences of what does or does not take place in the Soviet Union are to be felt by the whole of Europe."

This explains the persistent attempts to understand the processes under way in the Soviet Union in the light of the existing situation and of our evaluations of past, present and future. Participants from socialist countries asked us with great interest about the progress of perestroika, reacting animatedly to all the developments in the Soviet Union. "We are so much concerned with the developments in your country," a foreign acquaintance confessed to me.

Another thing was noticeable too. The changes in the Soviet Union are making many Western intellectuals, mainly in the liberal camp, keenly aware of the need for changes in their own countries as well, at least in the long term. "We have been expecting your perestroika for a long time," one American said in joke. "Now it's your turn to be patient and wait."

Reflections at Charles de Gaulle Airport

Because of the fog in Moscow, our delegation could not fly home according to schedule. Paris bustled with life and sparkled with lights some 30 kilometres away while we, like a faulty plane burning out its fuel before landing, endlessly walked in the envinrons of the airport hotel, eagerly waiting for news from an Aeroflot official.

But, as the saying goes, every cloud has a silver lining. It was a good opportunity to return mentally both to Klingenthal and Moscow and reflect on the past and the future, and, for instance, think what contribution Soviet peace workers can make - in the context of perestroika - to the democratization of the country's foreign policy.

The foreign policy department seeks primarily the advice of professionals. But are they not interested in drawing ideas from public opinion? Are they insured against mistakes and do they not need constructive criticism not only from top but also from bottom? Do not our people have a right to know in the clash of what alternatives (a natural process in a democratic society) the foreign policy of the country is shaped?

Our foreign policy makers do not yet take account of feedback from the people. Our national television has held several phone-ins. However, there has been no round table on foreign policy, and our newspapers and magazines have never published critical letters from readers on foreign policy issues.

Why can't the peace movement try to shake up our diplomats? Why can't it appear as a representative of citizen's diplomacy?

Reflecting in this way, and marvelling at the boldness and naivety of our thoughts, we encountered another group of passengers waiting for a plane to Moscow. They turned out to be executives from an economic organization. "Well, I hope you gave them a rebuff," one of them said, on hearing about the symposium. "But we didn't set ourselves such a task," one of us replied. "Oh, yes," the executive smiled ironically. "We gave a rebuff yesterday, and today we have to make them change their minds. So did you convert Christians to Marxism?" "You know," we replied. "That was not our task either." "Really? Why did they send you here then?"

Perhaps the economic executive is right, I thought. Why had we come such a long way and, in general, what can be achieved in the course of a few days of discussions? For, clearly, as after the thirteen previous symposiums, Christians returned home Christians and Marxists - Marxists.

Nevertheless, there is a change. Nearly all participants in the symposium pointed out at the final sitting that a step had been made towards the moulding of new ideas, new, more accurate notions about each other, our common home, and our future, notions and views without which it is simply impossible to orientate oneself in our extremely fragile world.

Such meetings as the Klingenthal symposium increase the knowledge, faith, strength and hopes not only of the participants but also of those with whom they meet later in universities, lecture-halls, parishes, research centres, parliamentary lobbies, and in the ranks of demonstrators. People become less complacent, a little more tolerant and thus wiser. They begin to understand better that a straightforward, mechanistic counterposing of the two systems, two outlooks leads to a dangerous impasse. Figuratively speaking, divided humanity has to cross a long bridge leading to a more secure and serene bank. Today, we are at best at the middle of this bridge.

Superconductivity: prospects

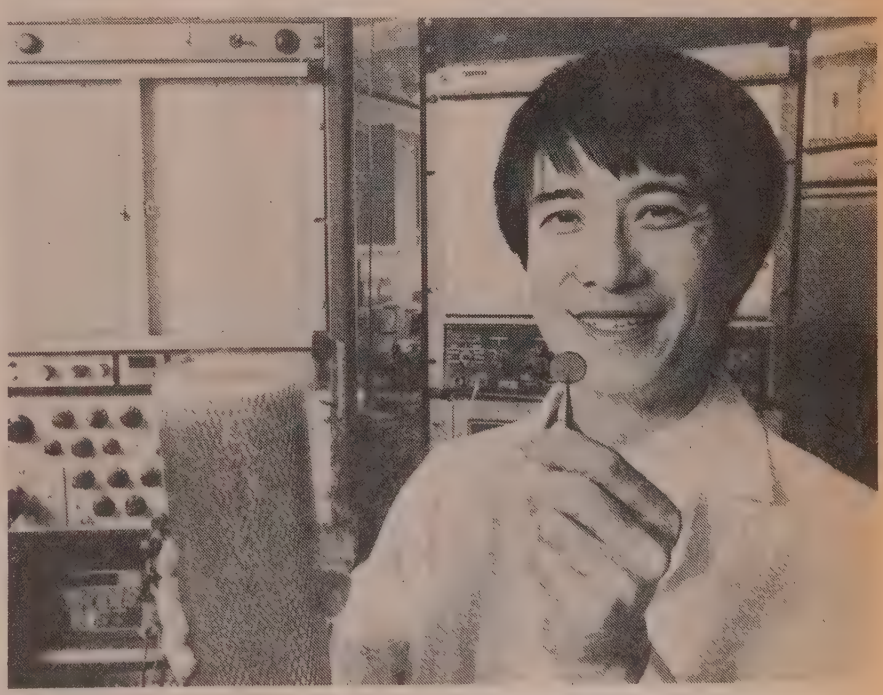
VLADIMIR KLIMOV

The physical phenomenon discussed below has actually been discovered twice. Whereas the first discovery, made early this century, didn't cause much of a stir, the second one set passions running high in the laboratories of many countries.

In 1911, the physicist Kamerlingh Onnes established a cryogenic laboratory in Leiden University, Holland, to study the behaviour of metals at very low temperatures. He was the first scientist to obtain liquid helium, whose temperature approached absolute zero, and to use it to cool certain metals. In the course of his experiments, Kamerlingh Onnes found that at a temperature of -269 degrees C (+4 degrees K), liquid helium causes mercury to lose its resistance to an electric charge, and to become a superconducting metal. Induced in a ring-shaped superconductor, a current would circulate through it for an infinite period.

Later, other metals and alloys were found to possess superconductive properties (as of now, over a thousand superconductors are known). It would seem that the discovery promised a breakthrough in technology. Engineers and scientists became interested in it. However, getting the low temperatures required posed what appeared to be insoluble problems. Cooling by means of liquid helium is an extremely expensive way of making a metal superconductive. Helium is rare and costly, and obtaining it is extremely complicated. A volatile gaseous element, it easily changes into vapour. Even storing liquefied helium is a problem.

Nevertheless, several projects that depended on superconductivity for their realization had already been advanced. An electric light bulb glows owing to the tungsten filament's resistance to the electric charge which heats not only the filament proper but also all the wires leading to the bulb from the electric power station. Although nothing much in itself, this heating causes enormous energy losses considering the total length of the wires. Superconductors rule out such losses. If implemented, just one project to transmit electric power using superconductors would save billions in terms of money.



January 1987. Professor C.W. Chu has just attained the critical temperature of 94 degrees K.
Photo from Recherche magazine (France)

Scientists have tried to raise the temperature at which a substance becomes superconductive with a view to making other, cheaper, coolants usable for the purpose. Over 75 years of research, however, they have only managed a 19-degree rise in the critical temperature.

A promising beginning

And now we come to one of those discoveries mistakenly believed to be "accidental." Actually, any "accidental" scientific discovery is a product of inspired intellectual effort and hard, painstaking, often monotonous, work.

In the sixties, many scientists applied themselves to the development of new materials based on oxides - combinations of certain elements in the Periodic Table with oxygen. The oxide-based elements obtained by hot pressing are called oxide ceramics.

In 1965, scientists at the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences Kurnakov General and Inorganic Chemistry Institute were commissioned to replace precious metals with non-precious ones in certain products. The chemists Nikolai Zhavoronkov, Vladislav Lazarev and Igor Shaplygin got down to the synthesis and investigation of compound oxides. The new substances were presumed to possess a number of specific physico-chemical properties.

Several years later the scientists came up with a substance with a pronounced metallic conductivity character. Its structure and properties defied many long-

established and universally accepted ideas.

In 1978, the three chemists took out a patent for the discovery known as "Electrical Conductivity in Platinum Metal Oxides." Although this does not mean much to the layman, the phrase describes a very interesting phenomenon: non-conductors synthesized into a substance possessing metallic conductivity. Physicists ought to have taken a good look at this unusual compound in search of other useful properties. Unfortunately, they did not.

In 1979, Vladislav Lazarev, Boris Kakhan and Igor Shaplygin contributed an article to the journal Neorganicheskaya khimiya (Inorganic Chemistry) describing the characteristics of the new compound in detail. The article summed up the results of their research. In all probability, however, none of the leading Soviet physicists read the article at the time. That was due to rigid specialization still strongly in evidence in science: chemists are to concern themselves with chemistry, and physicists with physics.

The Swiss sensation

Meanwhile, in the Swiss branch of the American company IBM, the phyhsicists Alex Mueller and Georg Bednorz were also looking for new materials, ceramic ones included. They were particularly interested in substances which could serve as electrolytes and capacitors for the batteries of electric motorcars.

Three years later they finally obtained a substance whose composition was roughly the same as that suggested by the Soviet scientists: barium-lantanum-copper-oxygen. Unlike their Soviet colleagues, however, Bednorz and Mueller checked the substance they had synthesized for electrical conductivity at low temperatures. It turned out that at temperatures of down to 30 degrees K the substance's electrical resistance dropped sharply. A remarkable achievement!

Nevertheless, their early report met with scepticism, so they did extra research into the magnetic properties of the specimens they had obtained. The results revealed a sharp decrease in the specimens' magnetization in the external field: lantanum-barium ceramic "expelled" magnetic flux from its interior just as a superconductor should have. This was the so-called Meissner effect - one of the chief criteria of superconductivity.

In April 1986 Bednorz and Mueller sent an article about their discovery to the F.R.G. journal Zeitschrift für Physik. The article was accepted - but not given much credence. It was only five months later that the report of this sensational discovery was made public.

Once published, the article had the effect of a starting pistol shot. Many laboratories across the world not only reproduced the Swiss scientists' results but even managed to raise the temperature at which their materials' transition to the superconducting phase began. Reports on this came in from the P.R.C. Academy of Sciences' Physics Institute, from the National Metals Research Laboratory of Japan, and from Houston and Alabama Universities in the U.S.A. The Americans published reports on their experiments in the well-known magazine Physical Review Letters as early as March 1987. The first report came from Chu's research team at Houston University, and the second from the group headed by Mau-Kwen Wu of Alabama. The American Chu, who had been studying superconductivity since 1965, reproduced the Swiss experiment and then decided to check lantanum-barium ceramics for superconductivity at high pressure - ten thousand times that of the atmosphere. The result was Tc (critical temperature at which the conductor's electrical resistance drops to zero) of 52 degrees K. At higher pressures, the critical temperature remained the same, however, so C.W. Chu decided to change the composition of the compound oxide he was experimenting with.

The resultant new compound turned into a superconductor at an unprecedentedly high transition temperature: 93 degrees K! By way of comparison the boiling point of liquid nitrogen is 77 degrees). A few days later, C.W. Chu repeated the experiment with greater attention to detail and obtained a critical temperature of 94 degrees K. This happened at the beginning of 1987.

On February 24, within eight days of Chu's reporting on the new high-temperature superconductor, the Chinese physicist Zhao Zhongxian told a Peking press conference that his team had attained a critical temperature of 98 degrees. The high-temperature superconductivity boom spread to all the countries in the forefront of scientific progress.

Following the leaders

Many foreign scientific and technical publications take too long to reach Soviet experts. Nevertheless, the news of the foreign physicists' dramatic progress in raising the transition temperature did get through to our scientists via various channels. Some of them joined this effort as early as January 1987 and obtained analoguous results in February-March.

One can imagine how the researchers at the General and Inorganic Institute felt when they learned that the material they had synthesized over a decade ago was a superconductor. It was cold comfort to know that a group of Soviet scientists headed by professor Maxim Savchenko had come up with a theory predicting that rare element compounds and ceramics could be turned into superconductors at high temperatures. There were other theories, too, such as the monograph "The High-Temperature Superconductivity Problem" by Academician Vitaly Ginzburg and other authors. In other words, our science had been practically and theoretically ripe for the discovery, but fortune was not on our side.

When Igor Shaplygin, one of the creators of lantanum-barium ceramics, learned of Dr Chu's results, all he could do was hand over the specimens he had obtained back in the mid-seventies to Eduard Tishchenko, D.S. (Phys.-Math.) of the Lebedev Physical Institute. Already on March 2, Dr Tishchenko and his associates brought one of these specimens, a decade old, to the superconducting phase at a critical temperature of 44.5 degrees K.

Igor Shaplygin, an inveterate optimist, keeps his sense of humour. "All right, we failed to discover high-temperature superconductivity in the late seventies," he says. "But for all that, we found that our specimens retained their superconductive properties well. We satisfied ourselves that over ten-odd years neither dust, nor solar radiation had affected them. This kind of experiment is in a class by itself."

Later, researchers at Moscow State University reported having attained superconductivity at 98 degrees K. In the superconductivity laboratory of the Physics Institute under the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences Alexander Golovashkin and his team raised critical temperature to 102 degrees K. This record was beaten just two weeks afterwards when a ceramic specimen became superconductive at 250 degrees K, or a mere -23 degrees C. By now practically all the leading experimental groups both in our country and abroad have synthesized oxide compounds which change over to the superconducting phase at a temperature 100 degrees above absolute zero and higher. Science and technology have entered a new era.

Peering into the future

This discovery is of enormous technical and economic, as well as theoretical, importance. It would be no exaggeration to say that modern civilization is on the threshold of a scientific, technological and industrial revolution: superconductors possess phenomenal properties and colossal potential.

Now the way is being paved for the most daring engineering projects and scientific ideas. We have already discussed the problem of long-distance power transmission. Some think that up to 20 per cent of the energy transmitted today is wasted on overcoming the electrical resistance of wires. Ruling out such losses is every power engineer's most cherished dream.

Scientists have long been trying to harness the thermonuclear reaction. Su-

perconducting magnets are also used in the Tokamak reactors which confine plasma magnetically for it is only such magnets that can ensure a stable magnetic field to serve as a "chamber" for the plasma. The Tokamaks' sophisticated cryogenic equipment uses liquid helium as a coolant which costs 10-11 rubles a litre. It can be replaced by a much cheaper cooling agent, liquid nitrogen (cost: 4-10 kopecks a litre), which is extracted direct from the air by means of a compressor. While surpassing helium in cooling efficiency (liquid nitrogen's vaporization heat is almost ten times higher) it requires much simpler and cheaper cryogenic equipment than does helium. Therefore, cooling superconductors in liquid nitrogen will reduce the present cost of the process to a fraction. And if highly economical superconducting magnets are made by the newly discovered methods, the Tokamak reactors will become a paying concern, and the thermonuclear reaction will finally lend itself to commercial use.

This involves several problems for scientists to deal with. The point is that "nitrogen" oxide-ceramic superconductors won't do for the purpose. Therefore the task now is to develop high-temperature superconductors of a kind capable of replacing metal-alloy ones.

Scientists often stage the following experiment in their laboratories for the benefit of journalists. They pick up a piece of superconducting ceramic material, cool it in liquid nitrogen, and place it in the centre of an ordinary annular magnet. The superconductor remains suspended in midair, right in the centre of the magnet. The onlooker can easily imagine what this effect could bring: friction-free rolling bearings, magnetic-cushion transport, etc.

The fact that in a short-circuited superconductor coil current flows without losses heralds the advent of various energy accumulating facilities that are bound to find many uses in transport, for instance - such as powering electric motorcars.

Another likely application of superconducting energy accumulators is the power industry. Imagine an enormous superconducting cable forming a circle underground, with energy generated by various electric power stations supplied to it. As a rule, this energy is short in the daytime, while at night the supply far exceeds demand. That is why scientists in many countries are racking their brains over the problem of storing it. Now the saving of energy for subsequent use is slowly but surely becoming a realistic proposition.

The most accurate measuring diagnostic and medical instruments also depend on superconductors for their operation. Quantum magnetometers - devices that respond to the slightest changes in magnetic field intensity - have been developed and are already in use. They have made super-accurate measurements possible. Magnetometers are already finding their way into clinics as the first ever magnetocardiograms have been taken.

Moreover, there already exist instruments whose operating principle is based on the effect of nuclear magnetic resonance. These instruments are called NMR-tomographs. They afford an insight into the soft tissues of the human body and help detect certain tumours. Presumably, many a doctor dreams of having such a device in his clinic. What has prevented this dream from coming true so far is the combination of the NMR tomograph's high cost, sophisticated design and large size: the device is built around a superconducting magnet cooled by liquid helium. This equipment has brought into being a whole department of modern medicine called magnetoencephalography which is concerned with the study of weak magnetic fields induced by the human brain. Magnetoencephalography has a great future: it will allow neuropathologists to probe deeper into the causes of nervous diseases, and equip them with more efficient methods of treatment.

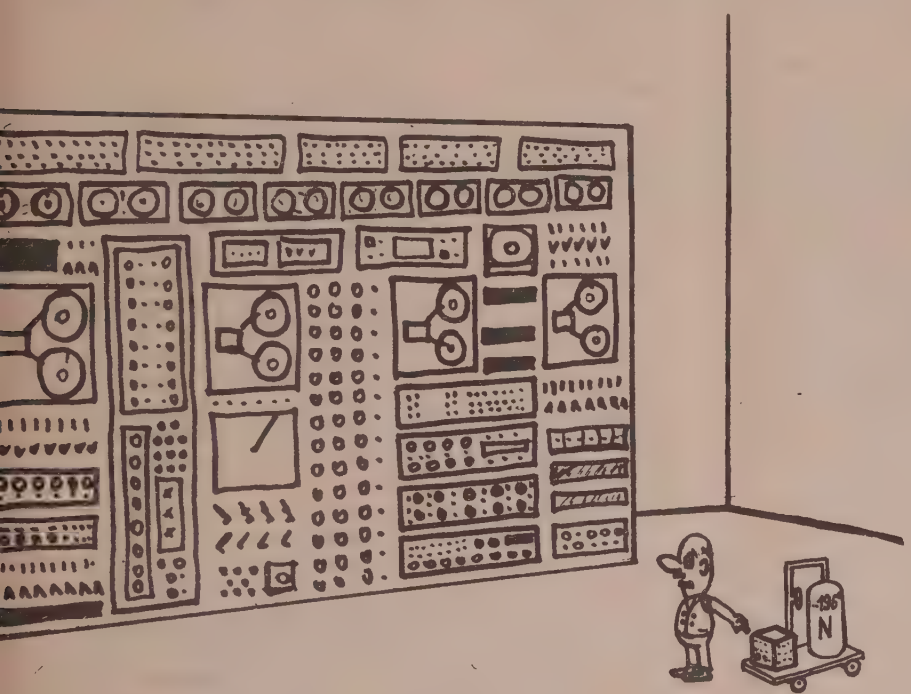
At one time, transistors were the basic elements of the electronic computer. Today thermionic rectifiers named after Josephson, the modern English physicist who invented them, are expected to constitute the basis of future computers. "Nitric" superconductors are to usher in a new era in computing technology. Electronic computers will gain in operation speed; the heat released by their electronic circuits will be reduced, making it possible to miniaturize computers further and to enhance their reliability.

* * *

The importance of the discovery of high-temperature superconductivity is realized fully at the highest government level. The U.S. President is showing interest in the subject. A special conference, with representatives of science and industry attending, has been held in the White House.

In our country, a state programme for fundamental research in the field of high-temperature superconductivity is being worked out under the guidance of Nikolai Ryzhkov, Chairman of the U.S.S.R. Council of Ministers. It provides for a wide spectrum of research projects which are to promote the Soviet Union's further progress. The Kurnakov Institute of General and Inorganic Chemistry is one of the organizations responsible for these projects. Their chief objective is to synthesize a number of compounds capable of assuming superconductivity at high temperatures. These are supposed to be composite oxides, halogenides and other classes of non-organic compound. The ultimate goal of research is to bring pilot-scale processes to a commercial level.

Many scientists liken the discovery of high-temperature superconductivity to that of the chain reaction. Superconductivity is presumed to have incredible surprises in store for us. In science, one never can tell. When the first transistors appeared in 1948, they were believed to be mere substitutes for vacuum tubes. Who could have predicted then that within less then three decades personal computers and pocket-sized microcalculators would be commonplace, and that individual states would come close to the level of universal computerization? So let us hope that superconductivity has still to reveal its full meaning to mankind. ■



Don't you look down on this little thing: it only needs a little cooling to work as well as you do. Cartoon by V. Pozniak

To mutual advantage

Border trade: problems and prospects

Some time ago economists in a northern province of China discussed imports of chemical fertilizer. Having tested a Soviet product against an American one, they discovered that it is better suited to local conditions and brings better yields.

According to Chinese economists, this confirms the advantages of direct trade with the Soviet Union for China's border provinces. The high quality of Soviet exports and the low cost of transporting them across the joint border give Soviet products an advantage over those made in the West.

The same applies to Chinese-made goods popular in the Soviet Far East. Some Chinese exports can even compete with Japanese manufactured goods.

Views of our partners

According to the Director-General of the Chief Company for Foreign Trade of Heilongjiang Province Gao Yongwen who recently visited Blagoveshchensk to demonstrate his company's new products, it is his company's policy to expand border trade with partners in the Soviet Union. In his view, the economic potentials of territories on either side of the border complement each other, facilitating trade cooperation between the two countries. Indeed, there are shortages of some goods in the Far East of the U.S.S.R. and enough of these goods are produced in the neighbouring parts of China, which, in turn, are short of products and goods that can be readily obtained from the Soviet Union through border trade.

The Chinese are aware of the advantages offered by border trade. This year China has bought twenty times more cement in the U.S.S.R. and twelve times more mineral fertilizer than in 1983. Our partners in China have proposed that imports of fertilizer be increased to 200 thousand tons, or fifty per cent of the entire demand in Heilongjiang Province. The Soviet side intends in its turn to increase exports of goods that are not produced in China's north-eastern provinces. Sea food is an important element in Chinese cuisine, but the Chinese provinces bordering on the Soviet Union have no access to the sea and that is why they would like to buy sea food in this country. Talks were under way in Blagoveshchensk to expand the export of Soviet frozen fish. For their part, Chinese companies have offered Soviet docks and shipyards paints, varnishes, anchor chains and labour-saving mechanisms that are badly needed. Chinese canned beef and fruit will be a welcome addition to the food market in Soviet Maritime Territory.

Several enterprises geared to trade with China are to be built in the Far East, but standing production capacity is also becoming involved. According to Far Eastern economists, it would be expedient to include in the aggregate output plan the manufacture of parts and components on orders from China and to import Chinese goods to the same sum.

The prospects for cooperation in industry and commerce are also good. The north-east of China has a big pool of labour and there are shortages of labour in the Soviet Far East, which has an especially adverse effect on labour-intensive enterprises. It would be quite logical to process raw materials on our orders in China and assemble some industrial and engineering products of our prefabricated units and parts there.

The vegetable market in the Chinese town of Heihe three hundred metres across the Amur from Blagoveshchensk, is far richer than on the Soviet side of the border. Unlike Blagoveshchensk, the town does not import canned pickled cucumbers from Hungary, ten thousand kilometres away. The Chinese are very good at growing vegetables and a considerable proportion of local produce could be exported across the border. Soviet cooperatives, on the other hand, have a sizeable stock of cheap implements such as rakes, spades, forks, saws, sledge hammers and files which are in great demand in Chinese villages. Cross-border exchanges between cooperative organizations could be very useful indeed.

Border trade makes it possible to involve in the turnover various kinds of goods that the U.S.S.R. Ministry of Foreign Trade tends to regard as being of negligible economic value, in spite of the fact that they could bring in profits if sold across the border. At the moment the situation is rather a paradoxical one. Trade between the two countries is worth hundreds of millions of rubles, but fails to account for the daily needs of consumers in Blagoveshchensk who want to buy Chinese lamp shades or, for that matter, the wishes of young women in Heihe who prize coats made of thick woollen fabric of a kind with which Soviet stores in Blagoveshchensk are overstocked. This year border trade with China is expected to run to 50 million rubles, as compared with 6 million in 1983, but still stores in the Soviet Amur region do not have many Chinese goods on display.

There has been some progress, though. Following cooperative organizations in Amur and Chita regions, Khabarovsk and Maritime territories, their counterparts in the Buryat Autonomous Republic and Irkutsk and Sakhalin regions have also begun to trade with China. Ten Soviet enterprises of a countrywide significance have also become involved. In the autumn, representatives of Krasnoyarsk Territory and the fishing industry of Maritime Territory attended the exhibition of Chinese goods in Blagoveshchensk, where one thousand-odd items were on

Another batch of Soviet goods is going to China.

TASS photo

display. Once they have become involved in trading with China, border trade will double every year. It could be worth 100-140 million in 1988. What will sustain this growth?

Over the next 10-15 years the economy of the north-east of China will be interested in importing hardwoods and timber. A large part of its demand for them can be met by Soviet imports, but there are of course limits to the export of timber, as we do not want to fell all of Siberia's virgin forests and we must take our own economic plans, as well as the interests of our partners, into account.

So far, however, Soviet enterprises that are not economically independent have shown little interest in doing business, and there can be no talk about the rational methods of falling timber for export. Chita was the first to establish cross-border trading links with China.They accounted for a small proportion of the turnover. The obsolete and cumbersome managerial system is an impediment to them. Irkutsk joined in relatively recently. Cooperative organizations sell half-logs and planks to China, where the demand for them is great. The same could be done by enterprises in Amur and Chita regions, which have more than enough of such timber.

Much food for thought

Economists in Khabarovsk, Vladivostok and Blagoveshchensk share the view that local initiative can be stimulated by letting producers and manufacturers establish real independent cooperation in trade with foreign companies. The foreign trade agency Dalintorg and its subsidiary Dalprigran have been taking the lead up to now. Goods that did not feature on their balance sheets piled up in stores.

Some progress has been made, though. Recently Blagoveshchensk and Heihe discussed plans for establishing cooperation between their respective department stores. Chinese foreign trade agencies have been exploring the market in the Soviet border zone. As yet our Far Eastern enterprises are not active enough. In Vladivostok and Khabarovsk, the complaint is that every transaction, however small, has to be discussed and approved at many levels. Local cooperative organizations made the same complaint, as their goods earmarked for export to China had to be given the go ahead at at least three levels: by the local government, the management of Dalintorg in Nakhodka, and Rospotrebsoyuz in Moscow. Dalintorg received orders for goods offered by Chinese partners via a succession of intermediaries. On the other hand, Dalprigran's partners in China have for several years enjoyed unimpeded access to any supplier or local market in their own country, and this is why they have more room for prompt manoeuvre.

We asked members of the local government in the community of Pogranichny, a few kilometres from the Amur, whether they can establish direct trading links with the Chinese city of Suifenhe, where a commercial company has already been set up, and heard the customary, "Who is going to give us the funds?"

Vigorous "horizontal" commerce is on the order of the day, based as it is on the partners' economic independence. For this, the main thing is the enterprise's economic self-management.

Recently a party and government decision concerning the expansion of border trade has been adopted. The Dalintorg (Far East foreign trade organization) has been allowed to conduct trade operations with Australia, New Zealand, Singapore and Thailand. In short, good prospects are opening up. What is needed now is to take practical steps.

EVGENY VERLIN,
ALBERT KRIVCHENKO
Blagoveshchensk-Moscow

Riposte

To whom shall we pay our respects?

● THE ANSWER TO THIS QUESTION WAS PROVIDED BY JAN MLYNARIK, FORMER CZECHOSLOVAK CITIZEN, AND HISTORIAN.

Speaking on a Western radio station, he said that there was a special reason to pay one's respects to the soldiers who gave their lives in the battle for the liberation of Prague and who are buried in the Olsany cemetery. The reason was that those buried in the Olsany cemetery were not Red Army soldiers, but hundreds of soldiers of the Vlasov Army shot by the Red Army.

Mlynarik produced the following story. When the Soviet Army reached Prague on May 9, the fighting was actually over, and so there could not have been hundreds of fallen Soviet soldiers. The real Russians who saved Prague from destruction, Mlynarik explained, were the Vlasov soldiers, who had turned their guns against the Wehrmacht. "I agree with Solzhenitzyn," he said. "When we visit the sacred Prague memorial we should think first of all about them, and pay them our respects."

But before paying one's respects, one should stop to think of one thing: who were the Vlasov soldiers?

Opening the encyclopedia published in Prague (I hope Mlynarik has not forgotten his native language?) one reads: "Vlasov Army - made up of anti-Soviet military units formed during the war on occupied territories from traitors, anti-Soviet elements and those Soviet prisoners of war who agreed to fight on the side of Hitler's army." To this it could be added that the Vlasov units were used chiefly for convoy service behind nazi lines and against partisans on the territory of the U.S.S.R., Poland and Czechoslovakia.

As for the cemetery, he's talking nonsense. As a child, walking through the streets of Prague, he must have heard from his parents that Olsany cemetery is the burial place not only of Red Army soldiers, but of Russian soldiers who took part in the wars against Napoleon. Their remains were transferred from other parts of the city in 1906 on the orders of the Prague Commandant. The site for the present military cemetery was chosen at that time by a priest from the Russian Orthodox Church in Prague Ryzhkov. Documents relating to all this are kept in the office of the cemetery and are available to anyone interested. To that it should be added that there exists a register of all those buried in the cemetery. The list of Red Army soldiers was recently rechecked by competent Soviet bodies who confirmed the correctness of the names, ranks and military units of the buried men.

Incidentally, both Mlynarik and Solzhenitsin (and for that matter our readers) know what really happened in Prague on May 9, 1945. New Times (No. 19/86) reported on the truth and the myths about the liberation of Prague, and there is no need to return to the claims made by Mlynarik.

Let me recapitulate briefly. Vlasov units appeared in Prague a few days before the end of the war, when the fate of the Wehrmacht was already sealed. On the morning of May 7 they distributed leaflets throughout the city in which they stated their own political aims: "To destroy nazi Germany and Bolshevism." The Czech National Council that led the revolt declared that Vlasov's name discredited the political aims of the revolt, while its phrases about fighting nazism were nothing more than an attempt to gain a political alibi.

That same morning the Vlasov units crossed to the West bank of the Vltava River, and by lunch time there was no sign of them. Dressed in nazi uniforms, they captured vehicles and moved south, to southern Czechia, where they were able to surrender to American troops.

Surely the historian Mlynarik could not but have known this? Of course he knew, just as Solzhenitsyn knows. But why not try, making the most of the times, to dress commonplace treachery in a respectable martyr's guise and then give a lesson in patriotism to his fellow countrymen?

BORIS KOZLOV

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND HEALTH

This problem is discussed by GRIGORY KOSITSKY, physiologist, Corresponding Member of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Medical Sciences, VADIM ROTENBERG, psychophysiologist, Dr. Sc. (Medicine) and LEONID KITAYEV-SMYK, psychologist, Cand. Sc. (Medicine).

Talk conducted by Oleg Zhukov and Vladimir Zhitomirsky

N.T. Alexander Bek's novel "The New Appointment" shows a man who has all his life been engaged in a balancing act between his moral principles and external circumstances. The results, for him, are disastrous. But are things all that simple in real life? We live in a complex and contradictory world which often forces us to act contrary to our moral and ethical values. Whether or not you act in a certain way - you are bound to lose something.

Rotenberg. I think we should make it clear from the outset that there are no "miraculous" psychomedical recipes. Human life will always be full of passions, the interplay of views and interests, the joy of triumph and the inevitable sadness of failure. An inadequate perception of life processes may give rise to inner conflict, i.e., a person may find himself at odds with himself. This may impair psychosomatic health, that is, "the harmony of soul and body." Knowledge of the causes of such disorders makes it possible to work out a mechanism for optimal or "preventive" behaviour which softens the impact of the encounter with the so-called external danger. In an episode in Bek's book, the main character is present during a conversation between Stalin and Sergo Ordzhonikidze. The conversation is in Georgian which he does not understand. And yet, confronted with a direct question from Stalin, as to whose side he takes in the argument, he replies that Stalin is right, and this in spite of the fact that he feels profound affection for Ordzhonikidze, who is his friend and teacher. So, he has said something he did not want to say and has acted against his conscience. One thing leads to another, and a person who repeatedly acts against his conscience finds himself in conflict with his own idea of "himself" which considers such behaviour intolerable. Let us make a reservation: a person who has no conscience does not experience internal discord. While this type of individual may be extremely dangerous from the social point of view because he lacks principle, biologically such a person is healthy.

Man is an altruist by nature

N.T. As the sociologist Academician Tatiana Zaslavskaya has noted, frequent encounters with various forms of social injustice and the perceived futility of trying to achieve redress single-handed have caused some people to become socially inactive and to abandon their goals and ideals. On the other hand, many of those who persevere in the struggle for their ideals also end up moral wrecks. Is there a paradox from the medical point of view. Is the accompanying stress invariably harmful?

Kitayev-Smyk. In general the effects of stress or strenuous effort can be not only negative - as a result of failure, fear, grief, fatigue, etc., but also positive - the exhilaration of creative work, mutual love, the sense of achievement or the pleasure of physical exercise. While negative stress, called distress, can, if it lasts long enough, cause myocardial infarction, cerebral stroke, stomach and intestinal diseases, susceptibility to colds, premature baldness, psychic disturbances, loss of teeth, etc., positive stress, or eustress, increases the capacity for work and the organism's immunity to disease.

Kositsky. Nature originally creates each person with the physical and intellectual potential for altruistic functioning in society. But the crude reality of daily life,

Photo (right to left): Vadim Rotenberg, Grigory Kositsky, Leonid Kitayev-Smyk, Vladimir Zhitomirsky, Oleg Zhukov.
Photo by V. Panov

sometimes coupled with the wrong kind of education, turns us into pragmatists who rely on a direct response to what is happening and are far less inclined to pause and reflect on our attitudes. When nature begins to take revenge on us for our selfishness and callousness, we seek salvation in various theories, methods, diets and drugs, but not within ourselves.

Kitayev-Smyk. Talking about theories. Recent years have seen a new trend in psychotherapy with the attractive name of "humanist psychology." Its basic principle is to allow each individual to realize his moral, ethical and social potential without any "restrictive barriers," and naturally, without any pricks of conscience. The watchword is fulfilment in whatever way one likes. Such training liberates a person from inhibitions, makes it easier to exercise all his abilities and reduces dangerous nervous strain. Potentially traumatic situations are thus neutralized entirely within the individual or, naturally in capitalist society, at the expense of another individual. Meanwhile the social environment and ethos are completely ignored.

Rotenberg. It has to be admitted, however, that capitalist and socialist societies do have some problems in common - alcoholism, drug addiction, crime, not to speak of disease, including mental illness. Some of these phenomena can be traced to their class roots but no state can be insured against social anomalies. The theory of "humanist psychology" that you mentioned has the common drawback of all theories. It lacks universality. For instance, it emphasizes not the shaping of the individual by family and public institutions, but fulfilment, that is, the unfolding of a potentioal that exists independently of society.

Kositsky. But if the "human material" is inferior, one can only guess how such a theory would "benefit" a person with evil propensities.

Kitayev-Smyk. You are right. The adherents of "humanist psychology" are aware of this danger but hope that evil people would not need their services anyway. But if we use some of these principles and at the same time try to control what qualities are being realized, this would guarantee truly humanist, creative fulfilment of the individual in the future.

Respect for others - the key to self-esteem

Rotenberg. Let us look at a typical stress situation. Suppose a boy is being brought up in a family to believe that will, singleness of purpose and intelligence earn genuine respect from the community and in order to be a full individual and have self-respect he has to surpass his peers on all these counts. As long as the boy manages - sometimes through great effort - to be or seem to be the best or one of the best he is at peace with himself. But as the boy grows up he inevitably encounters those who are superior to him. As the hero of Dostoyevsky's "A Raw Youth" says, however good you are there is always someone better. Unaccustomed to valuing human virtue as such in others and constantly comparing himself with others, our young man or adult feels that inability to withstand competition humiliates him and saps his self-confidence.But at the same time, having been brought up to respect the qualities the rival possesses, he feels it is wrong to feel hostility towards someone who is in some way his superior. Indeed, he perceives such emotions as unmanly and a sign of weakness. So you get a conflict between respect for "strength," in whatever shape, and envy of it. The only way to redeem onself in one's own eyes and those of others is to resolve this conflict by recognizing merit in others and trying to improve oneself.

N.T. Unfortunately, such conflicts are not always resolved painlessly, on the personal and social level. Witness the thousands of letters to newspapers and magazines which provoke fierce arguments. On the other hand, we see that the absence of these conflicts can be just as dangerous for human health. An example is afforded by Victor Astafyev's book "Queen Fish" which describes a classic situation of social inactivity. For the hunters, who spend lonely winter months in the wild tundra, even a good hunting trophy is small consolation. Experienced trappers someti-

mes stop inspecting their traps, lose faith in themselves and in the existence of a different life somewhere, and lie on their cots staring blankly into space and slowly freezing. Husky young lads become so apathetic that they do not want to clear the snow in front of their log cabins, and to cook their meals. In spite of themselves, they increasingly feel irritation and anger towards each other.

Kitayev-Smyk. Every animal, including man, has built-in mechanisms which take into account and even presuppose the existence of competitive individuals. Lack of stimulus leads to the sensory deprivation described by Astafyev. Nothing can be more dreadful for man than loneliness, lack of fulfilling communication, dreary monotony. In ordinary life (I am talking about socialist society now) even if a person is waging a lone struggle, he acts not so much for his own sake as for the sake of an idea, another person, and the value of a person's attitude ultimately depends on the commitment to do something worthwhile for society. If a person begins to receive external evidence that others, the community do not need him, a mechanism of self-devaluation is set in motion, as experiments and observations have shown.

Rotenberg. In the field of labour activity, total standardization and monotony, when you know exactly what will happen tomorrow, next Friday or next Sunday, undoubtedly discourage initiative, which is very deleterious to health. In such cases it is very important to create conditions for the fulfilment of the individual, to look for new areas in which the individual can realize himself.

Kositsky. Our natural potential is gigantic: suffice it to say that even strenuous intellectual effort draws on only ten per cent of the brain's resources. There is tremendous untapped potential in man. Experiments with animals have shown that the most intolerable situation for them is total comfort and permissiveness. To change this cushioned situation they have often embarked on quests which exposed them to mortal danger. The desire for novelty, for change even in the most favourable of circumstances, is a biological quality shared not only by the lower animals but, even more so, by man. The situation in which there is no quest for new forms and in which information reserves have been exhausted is disastrous. This is not fortuitous: if a species has no urge for "cognition," and its individual representatives are not prepared, if only subconsciously, to sacrifice their lives for this, such a species is doomed to degeneration because in the constantly changing world only those are assured of survival who have managed, from generation to generation, to develop and perfect adaptation mechanisms.

Kitayev-Smyk. The Cuban psychologist Fernando Luis Gonzales Rey recently defended a doctoral dissertation here on the socio-psychological aspects of personality. He points out that the current conception of man is divided into descriptive levels - biological, physiological and others - which results in a fairly rigid scheme that fails to reflect the diverse ways in which man's inner world, ethical principles and social demands interact with the external circumstances, including the influence of these circumstances on the individual. He believes that will and integrated world outlook are formed in critical, extreme situations.

It is noteworthy that the Czech psychologist Oldrich Miksik believes that people in so-called extreme occupations (firemen, test-pilots, lifeguards, mountain climbers) reveal the highest sense of responsibility and confidence. From my observations of the Moscow ambulance service, I would include ambulance workers in that category. I would subscribe to the suggestion of Boris Bratus, a Soviet scientist, that the notion of personality is inseparable, in socio-psychological terms, from ethics, and that the individual develops fully if he or she has the corresponding ethical standards and duties.

Shaping a harmonious personality

N.T. In view of the increased attention to the human factor in the course of perestroika medical scientists should address themselves more to the problem of man and join forces with sociologists, educationalists and philosophers. What in your opinion should be their main area of effort?

Kositsky. Unfortunately, even people engaged in the study of the workings of the human organism - physiologists, psychologists, and neurophysiologists - hardly ever meet at a round table as we are doing now in your editorial office. As a result, for all the advances of medical science in recent years, the "departmental" approach to man has prevailed in medicine. Medical scientists study man at a molecular level, so to speak, forgetting that their "object" is a totality of biology, psychology and sociology, as Leonid Kitayev-Smyk has made very clear. I have spoken of the need to pool our efforts at a meeting of the Academy of Medical Sciences.

Rotenberg. I don't think anyone would challenge the basic premise that the human personality is impossible without an awareness of the polysemantic nature of the relations existing in the world. But that is the ideal. At the initial stages of education, we should see to it that the pupil is not a passive recipient of information. At present, I regret to say, active creative inquiry and behaviour are not encouraged in our schools. Everything is reduced to the imposition of simplistic cause-and-effect relations, formulas, the memorizing of dates, premises and commonplace truths. This is true even of literature. Imagination, initiative, flights of fancy and audacity are discouraged.

Kositsky. We could avoid blunders in education if we kept abreast of the new ideas generated not only in the pedagogical and other sciences but also in the practical field. I can't help telling you

about Mikhail Shchetinin, a schoolteacher whom I have been lucky enough to meet. By sheer enthusiasm and initiative, and without any outside help, he has achieved remarkable results in teaching. His system uses the latest achievements of pedagogics, psychology and physiology for example, the methods of Alexei Ukhtomsky to shape a rounded personality by involving both the logical and the imaginative, creative thinking. This makes it possible, in keeping with biological laws, to activate both the left-hand ("logical") and right-hand ("artistic") cerebral hemispheres. According to Shchetinin, a harmonious individual has a high capacity for empathy, responsibility for others, a sense of civic commitment. It has long been noted that physical health depends greatly on the state of a person's conscience and relations with other people. Shchetinin's system challenges the traditional norms and lays stress on initiative and activity. Of course he has to combat departmental bureaucracy, those who want to be on the safe side. Our school system is in the process of reform and local initiative should be given the green light.

Kitayev-Smyk. But man is not something static, given once and for all: he replenishes his moral and ethical potential daily and hourly by communicating with his fellow workers, his family, new acquaintances and friends. He reads books and magazines, goes to the cinema and theatre, museums and concerts. Leisure time is called the space for individual development.

Rotenberg. That is true, but no one can tell with what great difficulty and at what cost to himself a person sheds old and incorrect values in order to arrive at the truth, one of whose criteria is adequate perception of the surrounding world. If a person fails to realize his potential - everyone has this potential - for integration into this complex world, he becomes psychologically vulnerable in the face of its contradictions which can only be coped with by polysemantic thinking. This in turn leads to neuroses and other psychosomatic disorders.

Kositsky. Furst, the American scientist, makes some interesting observations in his book "The Neurotic: His Inner and Outer Worlds." Furst is a former Freudian who later adopted Pavlovian ideas. He comes to the conclusion that the typical neurotic is a decent person. This is a very sharp observation considering that it was made with regard to the dog-eat-dog capitalist society. The moral and psychological climate in socialist society is very different. Yet even in our society it is important for everyone to understand that convictions, activity and dedication to a higher goal are conducive to good health.

Our present approach to the individual reveals a huge gap between upbringing and health. From the moment a baby is born we try to place it in a hothouse environment and thwart its initiative, first by swaddling and later by all kinds of

prohibitions. As early as the last century the German doctor Christof Hufeland wrote that this kind of upbringing produces weak people because there is no strength without exercise. He added that an only child seldom lives to a ripe old age, while an austere Spartan upbringing is the key to longevity and a robust psyche.

N.T. Isn't there a danger of going to the extreme?

Kositsky. When I say austere I mean reasonable. We in this country have an excellent example in the Nikitin family. Professor Arshavsky, the founder of age psychology study, is working much doing extensive and productive work in the field. Our organism developed as a system for the control of motion and the scientist argues the importance of movement from an early age. Movement contributes to the development of the individual's intellectual potential.

N.T. Is the link between physical and mental development really as direct as you make it sound?

Rotenberg. Yes, at least in the early stages. When the child is still unable to talk and has no other means of self-expression and self-realization at its disposal, movement replaces everything, including mental activity, which shapes the central nervous system. The link becomes less rigid at later stages of the individual's development.

Kitayev-Smyk. The connection remains, only it becomes indirect. Elementary exercise is a simple way of translating emotional distress into salutary physical stress. As Pavlov wrote, a minimum of irritants is necessary in order to keep the higher nervous system active. Walking or some other form of exercise provide such stimulants. Leo Tolstoy did farm work in the morning, Beethoven composed his immortal music while walking, Mayakovsky would sometimes walk several kilometres a day along the beach composing his verses, Karl Marx paced his room so often that there was a trampled "path" on the carpet. Lenin often paced to and fro in his office thinking over what he was writing or reading. Examples can easily be multiplied.

Kositsky. A lot is being written and said about the usefulness of exercise. Our technological age has inevitably produced the notion of hypodynamia. But a still greater danger is "the hypodynamia of the soul." As I see it, what matters are the creative elements of cooperation and competition, diversity of means of self-expression and emotional involvement which sport and exercise have in common with labour and social activity. One has to have a sense of proportion and relevance, otherwise even jogging can give you a coronary if you do not enjoy jogging but do it because you know it is good for your health. The same would happen if people were called upon to be socially active but did not have an inner need to be so.

Public involvement as a factor of health

Rotenberg. In my opinion, social activity is integral to human nature.

Professor Ammon of the F.R.G. believes that destructive behavior in man is the result of wrong education. Human beings are innately constructive and oriented towards creative relations with other people. This is more or less the same as your idea of the innate altruism of human nature. According to Ammon, the potential for constructive activity can only develop if there is correct upbringing in early childhood, normal relations with the mother, who must, on the one hand, provide constant emotional contact and care and, on the other, offer the child freedom to develop as an individual. I am convinced that a further important component is subsequent education at school. If these conditions are violated, positive prerequisites can give way to a destructive and aggressive attitude directed against society and the individual himself, which eventually leads to various depressive states.

Kitayev-Smyk. For a socially committed person working towards a goal, the magnitude of the goal is very important. Phases of triumph and periods of setback and disappointment are bound to occur. If the civic and ethical principles underlying the cause are strong, the social roots deep and the principles noble, if a person is aware from childhood that he is heir to the traditions of the family, the work collective, the nation and is linked with the past through their history and with the future through his own decisions and actions, then such a person will always be able to resolve inner conflicts if they arise.

N.T. As a rule, understanding a mechanism enables us to influence it. Is there a physiological model of the state of stress?

Kositsky. The state of stress at various stages along the way towards the goal set can be represented as a function of the significance of the goal and the availability of the means to realize it - information, energy and time. The initial effort is not yet stress, but an upsurge of the organism's physical and intellectual strength, which increases the energy resources and the creative activity. Many biological and physiological mechanisms back up this process. The organism's potential is vast, as seen from the following facts: if all the muscle fibres of our body contracted simultaneously and there were no "antagonist" muscles, each of us could lift a load of thirty tons. The paradox lies in the fact that the resources are only activated up to the level that is necessary at a **given** time. If the resources mobilized prove to be insufficient, the next state sets in and involves the emotions of anger, fury and hatred. It is a sort of "vegetative storm," which needs immediate release, even if only through a minor success. But this does not always happen in real life. When the goal is very important and an assessment of the situation reveals that the means to achieve it are insufficient, the third state of stress sets in, and is qualitatively different from the previous one. It is the state of fear, dread and horror, a kind of paralysis of energy and intellect. This impairs the immunity system, with not only the protective but the compensatory and restorative reactions being weakened. In such a state the organism is most susceptible to various diseases. A breakdown can only be prevented by confidence in one's own strength and capabilities, an active attitude to life which is inculcated from early childhood. Further increase in the level of stress causes breakdowns and neuroses, which call for immediate medical treatment.

Rotenberg. This happens if, in pursuit of his goal, a person fails to assess himself, panics and triggers off aggressiveness towards a more successful rival. The experiments conducted by the American scientist Seligman have shown that animals which have lived through and coped with critical stressful situations in childhood, actively resist it and preserve psychosomatic balance when exposed to the stressful situation again. Moreover, Seligman's experiments demonstrated that animals which are active in apparently hopeless situations do not develop tumours even when they are **grafted** to them. In a sound person with a correct perception of himself and the world around him, the ability to find one's own place in life and to think imaginatively, i.e., establish not only unilinear but polysemantic links, guarantees the harmonious integration of the individual into the surrounding world not only on the rational but also on the emotional plane. Such integration is ensured by correct upbringing in family and school, as well as by a constant quest for improvement and a high level of social commitment.

N.T. It can then be said that to be healthy one must be socially active. The organism's latent potential must be used for the welfare of society. Family and school play the key role in that. Nor should one forget the importance of coordinated recommendations coming from all the sciences of man. Man should apply his intellectual potential to the full measure of his ability to solve the tasks society sets before him. A feeling that one is useful, coupled with a high level of social activity, constitutes the fulfilment of the natural human programme, maintains the normal functioning of all the organism's systems and ensures good health.

Rotenberg. Let me add in conclusion that the recent changes in our society involve a growing number of people in social activity. Social activity is self-stimulating and self-rewarding because it performs its biological function as a motive force in the development of each individual. Renunciation of social activity is harmful biologically and socially, both for the individual and for society as a whole.

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